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ABSTRACT

This volume presents a collection of writings from a coalition of black educators. Through a survey of some of the literature, the first study attempted to identify the sources of the misconceptions in the description and the behavior of black Americans. The second paper examines several assumptions about black children and families inherent in social science research. Pathological interpretations of linguistic and cognitive behavior of black children have influenced federal and local intervention programs to compensate for alleged deficits. This paper provides another way of looking at black children and their education. The third article deals briefly with Piaget and his theories, and addresses itself to the implications of the theory in a school setting for black children. Parents, teachers, their individual stresses, and their relationships are addressed in the fourth study. The last paper looks at four areas requiring societal preparation and their respective impacts on children. The areas covered are: (1) double messages, (2) intolerance of differences, (3) ethnocentrism, and (4) victim blaming. A fifth type of preparation which can facilitate responsible adulthood and meaningful advocates for children and youth in a pluralistic society is also summarized. (Author/AM)

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COLLECTIVE MONOLOGUES 1:

TOWARD A BLACK PERSPECTIVE IN EDUCATION

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Printed in the United States of America.

For all the Black children everywhere

who must succeed. . .

for the good of all humanity

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Illustrations by Robert D. Smith

PREFACE

STAGE 7, a coalition of Black educators, takes its name from Erik Erikson's developmental theory, where the seventh stage is called "generativity vs. stagnation." According to Erikson, generativity encompasses the evolutionary development which has made man the teaching and instituting as well as the learning animal. Man's insistence on dramatizing the dependence of children on adults often blinds us to the dependence of the older generation. Mature man needs to be needed and maturity needs guidance as well as encouragement from what has been produced and must be taken care of. Generativity, then, is primarily concerned with man's relationship to his production as well as to his progeny.

The members of STAGE 7 are so committed. Over the past three years, we have been involved in a personal growth process toward the development of a Black perspective in education, and in sharing our growth through workshops and seminars with others. The collaborative process has led us to develop trust in each other and to grow personally and professionally through extended interaction. Each member has been allowed to determine the function for which he or she was best suited and as a result, a symbiotic relationship has emerged with everyone working to benefit the other. Through the process of planning and carrying out training workshops, we have become more excited and more productive, for it has been through the participants in those groups that we have enhanced our growth, our motivation, and our learning.

The true essence of our experience together cannot be captured in words, (perhaps typical of <u>any</u> activity which takes place in a true "Black style",) but more important is the fact that we are growing, and changing. The task we set before ourselves three years ago remains our challenge. And we see ourselves taking the responsibility for being generative toward that goal of developing a Black Perspective - an alternative framework within which Black behavior may be differently described, explained, and interpreted.

This collection of writings represents movement and change, and has resulted from the vigorous social inventiveness of the STAGE 7 spirit. Although authored individually, the thoughts are reflective of collective ideas and collective inspiration.

We are not the first group to meet together to examine the educational experiences of Black children. Black people have always believed in a sought quality education. At one time learning to read and write was against the law for us. We are a result and a part of the history of that struggle. As Black educators, we must continue to focus our attention on the quality of education for Black children in our country today. As Margaret Borroughs has said in her magnificient poem:

What shall I tell the children who are black
Of what it means to be captive in a dark skin
Raised in a white world? Where only white has
Been made to represent all that is good, pure,
And decent. What can I do that they may come
Through life as whole human beings unwarped,
In a world of biased laws and inhuman practices
That he might survive and succeed and succeed
He must! For who knows - Perhaps this black
Child bears the genius to discover the cure for
All sickness or to chart the course for exploration
Of the universe. So he must succeed for the good
Of all humanity.

I have drunk deeply of late from the fountain of
Black culture and discovered the truth of my
Heritage - the truth so often obscured and I
Find that I have much to say.

Mary Valley
Carol Brunson Phillips
1976

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Of the many people we wish to thank we owe a special debt of gratitude to our colleagues Joyce Robinson and Jeanne Simmons whose thoughts are a part of ours. . . .

To our families we wish to express our thanks for their patience and understanding. For all the hours we have spent away from them - meeting, traveling, and writing, we recognize their sacrifice in support of us.

To Asa and Pat Hilliard for sharing themselves and their family with us.

To Louise Derman-Sparks and J. D. Andrews who encouraged us to write.

To Carol Walker who typed for us and worried with us.

To Pacific Oaks College for the time and space to know ourselves better.

And a special acknowledgement ot each other and the forces beyond us, for having been brought together in the first place. . .

INTRODUCTION

A generic problem in the education profession seems to be a kind of "escapism" when confronting problems in teaching and learning. It is easier to discuss the general societal, political, or economic forces which effect professional practice than to examine, analyze, and explicate the practices themselves. Occasionally there are groups or individuals who are able to free themselves from the tyranny of abstractions and diversions and to go to the heart of a matter. When that does happen we all experience a degree of hope and inspiration.

Stage 7 is a group of daring and creative practicing professionals, who have tackled some of the thorny problems of education head on. Specifically, they have organized themselves as a problem solving group to attack the problem of how educators may create educational environments to provide for equality of educational opportunity among all our children. As a result of their intensive focus on this problem area, we have both their theoretical formulations and their practical proposals which do provide fresh perspectives for those who work with children. It is to their credit that they have the courage to share information about their progress as that progress unfolds. They have not delayed until a "final product" was available.

Included in this book are articles which, while done by individuals, are really harmonized as a basic statement about teaching in out plural society. It has been my personal good fortune to have been present at many of the workshops, brainstorming sessions, and self-evaluation meetings conducted by Stage 7. They have been, to say the least, a model of the real work of true educational professionals.

Here then is a sample of the fruit of their work. Its high value will be apparent as you read further.

Asa G. Hilliard III

Carol Brunson Phillips

RETHINKING THE STUDY OF BLACK BEHAVIOR

As long as the Black researcher asks the same questions and theorizes the same theory as his white counterpart, the Black researcher will continue to be part and parcel of a system which perpetuates misunderstanding of the Black reality...

Wade Nobles, 1975

INTRODUCTION

One of the most difficult tasks facing the human race is the description and analysis of human behavior. Perhaps we will never achieve truly "scientific" results; yet, in the course of our attempts, we must become continually aware of our inadequacies, our bias, and our human error.

Over the years of scholarly study of Black Americans, much inadequacy, bias and error has been evident. Through a survey of some of the literature, this study attempts to identify the sources of the misconceptions in the description and the behavior of Black Americans. The factors which have influenced the way that behavior has been viewed have also in some ways affected the very nature of that behavior. In this sense, Black family life in particular, will be examined in terms of the historic and contemporary influences which have shaped its structure and function. This analysis will hopefully lead to more positive perspectives in the future.

THE BLACK COLLECTIVE: SOURCES OF ERROR IN SOCIAL SCIENCE INQUIRY

Cedric Clark (4) distinguishes between the study of Black people and Black studies. Black studies takes as its interpretive framework the nature of Black people, while the study of Black people takes as

its interpretive framework the nature of non-Black people. Much of what has been written about Black people has proceeded from a negative or non-Black perspective. The Moynihan Report, for example, which to date is probably the most well known study of the Black family, and which is referred to in most writings about Black people, is an illustration of this perspective. It describes the family as crumbling, based on the rates of dissolution of Black marriages, the rates of Black illegitimate births, the rates of welfare dependency, and the rates of families headed by females. Moynihan's analysis is based on a set of assumptions, implicit in social science thinking, which lead to the interpretation of Black people based on the nature of non-Black people.

This interpretive framework is generated by forces in this society that affect the way people think and perceive. The forces and assumptions which they generate are delineated for purposes of discussion to include: (1) an European world view, (2) ethnocentrism, (3) racism, and (4) victim-blaming. Each of these factors demonstrates a potential source of influence over the motivations of researchers, their expectations, the nature of their objectivity, and their conclusions.

EUROPEAN WORLD VIEW

In Black Psychology (4) Clark describes a "european conception of reality" as based on the dualistic conception of Descartes, (later refined by the British empiricists,) which suggests that the only truth that matters is that which is given to us by our sensory experience with things. The mind may exist, but it is totally independent of matter and what is important is the reality of matter. What is observed, rather than what is sensed, is what most traditional psychologists would accept as valid knowledge. As a result, science and social science tend to focus on the visual mode and neglect other means of receiving sensory experience and the realities that it may create for the organism. Researchers subsequently focus on the effects of the reality of a society on the behavior which it generates as if the reality was perceived primarily as a visual influence. In studying a group of people whose philosphy of reality may be different, it becomes impossible to "see" the perception of reality by means other than the visual mode.

Robert Ornstein's work on modes of consciousness (25) looks at Eastern and Western thought from a physiological point of reference. His position is that since the nervous system allows only a limited selection of available stimulation, what man selects through his sensory modalities to construct a stable consciousness is to some extent culturally determined. Western man has sought to achieve objective and impersonal knowledge based on logical and linear analysis, and each

member of western society shares a set of "unconscious" assumptions given them by the very organization of the culture and the possession of a common language. All members of a cultural group may agree then on certain events because they are similarly limited by the culture: it becomes therefore very easy for us to confuse common agreement with an external reality. (25)

Western science has influenced man's perception of his relationship to the universe as well. According to Lewis King, the eighteenth century proclaimation of rational man and belief in progress was emeshed in assumptions about the ability to define ultimate truth and the ability to measure it in some fixed quantities. (17) These assumptions continue to influence twentieth century social science inquiry through the following axioms:

1. that events are causally related
2. that the causes of any event can be discovered
3. that science is composed of empirical statements which deal with concrete phenomena
4. that the phenomena can be measured
5. that the operational definition can be used by other researchers
6. that the results are predictable and thus become controllable

Kwame Nkrumah, an African philosopher, states that this notion of causality is inadequate to comprehend the thought of African or other non-European peoples. (5) When one asks what is real, one must also ask how did that reality come about; for either reality was caused by something other than itself or it was caused by itself. European thought demands that everything be caused by something other than itself. It has subsequently become concerned with fixing things in time and space and with individuality, atomism, and mechanism. Man and his universe are separate entities; man and nature are adversaries, and the survival of the fittest is the highest goal. African thought does not demand that everything be caused by something other than itself. It is based on notions of unity, harmony, and oneness with the universe.

African World View

Wade Nobles (24) describes African social reality as based traditionally on guiding principles which see the universe as interdependent and all-connected, the environment as life-giving, and the survival of the tribe as the highest goal. The modern African behavioral principles of unity, self-determination, collective work and responsibility, cooperative economics, purpose, creativity, and faith, are a reflection of that ethos. African family life, where a deep sense of kinship existed, reflected the all-connectedness; family members were related to tribal ancestors, to persons yet to be born, and to every living person in the tribe. There existed a sacred obligation to continue and

extend one's line, in that everyone's existence depended upon those he conceived and personally nourished, but also on every member of the tribe -- living and dead. The function of the family was based on the union of elements to make up the whole: the people, roles, relationships, and processes flowed rhythmically into each other. The elements were flexible and interchangeable as opposed to functions which are distinct, concrete, and exact. The organization of the earth's system was believed to be reproduced in every individual. Action and belief were not separated - they belonged to a single whole. What people did was motivated by what they believed and what they believed was motivated by what they did.

Consequently the African concept of man, based on notions of unity, is different from the European concept, where the mind-body split is a fundamental notion. For Africans, who believe that man is a complicated, integrated, unified whole, concerns such as the mind-body controversy would never arise, and theoretical developments and/or analyses based solely on the explication of the mind or the body as separate entities would be useless (21, 22).

Influence on Contemporary Studies

Vernon Dixon discusses the contrasts between Euro-American cultures and Afro-American as they have respectively been influenced by different world views. (9) His position is that there are certain philosophical characteristics of each which in research determine the choice of assumptions in particular and the methology in general. He discusses axiology (the study of the values one holds,) epistomology (the study of how one knows,) and logic (the study of how one organizes what one knows.) Euro-American axiology consists of man-object relationships, where the major value lies in the object and its acquisition: men attain self - value or achieve optimal individual personal gain through the maximization of the ownership of objects. The man-object relationship suggests a split between man and nature, leading one to seek mastery, control, and exploitation (9 p. 166.) The Afro-American axiology is based on a man-man relationship: the highest value lies in man himself. The sensitivities and values of Blacks become affiliation oriented. The highest self-value is attained through maximization of interpersonal harmony and satisfaction. The phenomenal world becomes personalized: man is in nature. Man and the phenomenal world are mutually dependent. They personalize nature and work with the elements rather than against them.

When the values of Blacks are studied within a framework of Euro-American axiology, subsequent conclusions are drawn about an inability to delay gratification, apathy, and ambivalent attitudes towards property rights.

In epistomology, the focus on how one knows is in terms of

object-measure cognition (Euro-American,) where reality comes to be known through the interaction of object and measure. The object is the totality of the phenomena conceived as constituting the non-self: all that is totally independent of the self. Events or phenomena are treated as external to the self rather than being affected by one's feelings. Reality is that which is set before the mind to be apprehended, whether it be things external in space or conceptions formed by the mind itself. In either case, there is a gap between the self and the phenomenal world. The measure then, in quantifying the object, attempts to measure space between things. Phenomena differ, one from another, based on an ability to perceive boundaries, limits, and discontinuities. The more precise and numerically quantifiable the boundaries, the more knowable the phenomena. Reality then, is fixed: man's perception is neutral. Only his interpretations change. By this notion, man is separate from his universe and from nature. What western thought calls "voodoo" and "magic" rests on such assumptions and sees these activities as an attempt to bridge the separation (9).

In Afro-American epistomology, the focus on how one knows is in terms of affect-symbolic imagery: affect and symbolic imagery operate together to produce knowledge. There is no separation between the self and the phenomenal world: the "feeling" self is an essential part of cognition. The self must feel, must experience, must internalize, must personalize the world. The affective part of cognition knows the nature of reality experientially and holistically. Affect interacts with evidence or symbolic imagery. Symbolic imagery is the use of material or concrete signs (words, gestures, objects, etc.) to convey meaning. It is not an adjunct or a prop to the act of thought; the imagery is inherent in the act of intellection itself. Accordingly, Black personality is oriented towards image construction and invention. Black metaphor is not perceptive but a part of the act of cognition through the use of imagery as the heart of reality. Symbolic imagery together with affect enables Blacks to know (9).

In Euro-American logic, man organizes what he knows based on either/or logic. According to either/or logic, everything falls into one category or another but cannot belong to more than one category at the same time in the same respect. The law of identity (A is A), the law of contradiction (A is not non-A), and the law of the excluded middle (A cannot be non-A; neither A nor non-A), are based on this logic (9). From this viewpoint, Black language as a reflection of cognition, is judged illogical in that it expresses concepts that are not either/or. The characteristics of multiple meanings, tolerance for ambiguity, and an ease with seeming contradictions have been pointed to as evidence of illogical thought processes, lack of structure, underdeveloped intellectual functioning, and inferiority.

Logic for Blacks is not either/or but "Diunital." That is, something apart and unified at the same time. Something can both be in one category and not in that category at the same time and in

the same respect. In other words, X is A and not A at the same time and in the same respect. Blacks can pursue self-interest and non-self-interest at the same time, the latter being the welfare of their other brothers and sisters. And one can be healthy and still have the blues (9).

ETHNOCENTRISM

In addition to a philosophical base which permits interpretation based only on its assumptions, there are also social, historical and political factors which influence the way Blacks are perceived. Ethnocentrism, the notion that one's racial group is superior to all others, is manifested by the establishment of standards of behavior by which everything is compared and judged, and has led to the description of groups in society in terms of the ways in which they deviate from the Anglocentric norm. Africans are "uncivilized" in that they have not "achieved" the level of "civilization" as defined by European man. It is as if all of humanity was involved in a single developmental process and every cultural pattern judged as if it were in a single succession of developmental events (18). Black people thus become viewed as deficient whites.

The study of female headed Black families has been conducted in an ethnocentric fashion, in that the interpretations have been made using middle-class white families as a standard. The middle-class Anglo view of the healthy family is two parents and children; so in observing a Black family where a male head (husband) is absent, an investigator calls it a "matriarchy." Because a matriarchy is an unnatural state, it follows to use a Freudian psychological analysis to look for psychosexual and identity hang-ups in the male children and generational trends in the female children to reproduce in the same matriarchical model. The solution to the problem then is to reorganize the family into a two-parent unit in order to restore it to its natural state.

Viewing the family structure of Blacks from a non-ethnocentric point involves a departure from the notion of the inferiority of kinship patterns which are unlike the nuclear unit. Cultural and historical information is useful in judging Black families based on their own integrity.

RACISM

Asa Hilliard describes racism as a mental illness (15) characterized by perceptual distortions, delusions of grandeur, (belief in one's own superiority or one's group superiority,) phobias or fears of groups that are different, and denials of reality.

Among the theses generated by delusions of grandeur is that because of the superiority of the dominant cultural group, it controls and determines the nature of life of the sub-group. Many studies of Black people proceed from the premise that patterns of Black life in America are a direct result of the Black experience in American and they treat behavior characteristics as if they were a reaction to a general situation of oppression. Frazier, for example, in his study of the Black family seems to hold that position and states: "...as a result of the manner in which the Negro was enslaved, the Negro's African cultural heritage has had practically no effect on his evolution of family life in the United States." He later concluded "...the Negro family acquired the character of natural organization in that it was based primarily upon human impulses and individual wishes rather than on laws and mores." (11 p. 17-18)

Wade Nobles has been vehement in defending the position that there are two notions in particular which have been subscribed to by social scientists that are false: (1) that the African world view has been destroyed through the Middle Passage, and (2) that the nature of the development of Black family life has been solely determined by American life. His position is that Black families today are a resolution of the conflict between the European and the African world view. There is an implicit philosophy within every family and the cultural continuity which exists for Black families must be recognized in order to study it based on its own integrity (21 p. 27).

Although not particularly concerned about the question of proof, Dr. Nobles addresses himself to the question - how can one know that "Africans" living in contemporary times still have or maintain an African philosophical definition? As evidence, he cites the nature of the rigidly enforced isolation/insulation from alien cultural interaction which New World Blacks experienced through the system of slavery, as a mechanism which encouraged retention rather than destroyed it. He maintains also that the practice of purposely separating family and tribal members led not to a total loss of identity, but to a sense of underlying communality among all Blacks in general. In addition, the laws which prohibited slaves from being taught to read or write permitted cultural transmission as well as supported the African emphasis on oration and its important effects on mind and memory (20). Support for retention can also be found in historical analyses. Chancellor Williams (31) has observed that during the thousands of years of African civilization there were a series of African kingdoms that arose and flourished and which were destroyed and rose again. As they were destroyed, people scattered and dispersed from one part of Africa to another. Regardless, as new kingdoms arose there were strong similarities between the old and the new. This indicates a strong cultural continuity among African people despite forces of destruction, and points to a strong value base which enables Blacks to put together new civilizations and continue the

basic values of African heritage.

Among the denials of reality generated by racism is the notion that the founders of civilization were white. Accepted as a historical fact, it has deeply influenced the notion that Blacks are "culturally deprived" or in essence without culture. As Theodore Lothrop Stoddard points out in The Rising Tide of Color Against White World Supremacy, it has a positive effect on white race psychology to think that the founders of civilization were white. The racial conclusions of G. Stanley Hall, Lewis Terman, Arthur Jensen and William Shockley (29) have been built on a whole series of culturally reinforced notions of Black racial inferiority based on a historical backlog of information which documents Africa as a primitive and barbaric Dark Continent. Recently, Black historians are making us aware of a different history which tells us that at the very earliest period known to mankind, there existed an African civilization where all the arts of civilized life were already matured.

Chancellor Williams' study (31) concentrates on such crucial areas of the history of Blacks what have either been unknown, known and misinterpreted, or known and deliberately ignored, and focuses on what Blacks achieved alone -- independently of either Europe or Asia. He documents ancient African kingdoms as great seats of knowledge and civilization and the process by which western civilization destroyed African identity by changing names to Christian names; by disfiguring and destroying African monuments and statues which pointed to the superiority of Black civilization and by claiming African achievements as those of white men (white history and geography have placed whites in Africa before Blacks and have placed Egypt in the Asian Middle East rather than in Africa.) Finally, he documents actual Black people who through recording were changed to white people and great leaders who were purposely not referred to as African or Black.

Other writers, such as J. A. Rogers have further sought to eliminate racist bias in the writing of history. These efforts are crucial in determining the historical nature of Black life and in seeking to determine its connection to and usefullness for the interpretation of Black life in the present day.

An elimination of racist delusions, distortions, and denials can lead to new paradigms for the study of Blacks. Janice Hale for example, has suggested a structure for the study of the Black family which takes into account its several dimensions - African, Afro-adaptive, and non-Afro. The challenge of identifying behaviors in the various categories seems to be quite critical. For psychologically, it will make a difference if we see Black language as a reflection of a language system with roots in Africa as opposed to seeing it as an adaptive version of English designed to cope with oppression in America. In my opinion, however, the importance of such a

structure lies within the basic implications: that Black people must be described within the context of their Africanity. It is important in supporting the concept of a comprehensive cultural unity which characterizes Black life styles. It is also psychologically important that it be an analysis which attributes some elements of Black behavior to the creation of Blacks, rather than as a reaction to racism or oppression. This is not to suggest that Black Americans have not had to adapt to an oppressive system, but to suggest that the nature of that adaptation has been significantly influenced by a strong cultural history.

VICTIM BLAMING

"Victim-blaming" as described by William Ryan, is that way of thinking which causes one to look for the source of problems within the people identified with the problem (26). He identifies a process that works like this: (1) Identify a social problem; (2) Study those affected by the problem and discover in what ways they are different from the rest of the population; (3) Define the differences as the cause of the problem; (4) Assign a government bureaucrat to devise a humanitarian plan of action to correct the differences. Victim-blaming can be clearly demonstrated in the study of Blacks: government reports tell us that the major obstacle to Black social progress in this country is the fundamental weakness of the Black family. Scientists tell us that the major cause is a genetic deficit. Even well-meaning attempts to improve conditions for Blacks conclude that Black values are misplaced and that the Black experience is inadequate. In point of fact, the aim of programs like Headstart, Home start, and Parent Education, as well as the motivations behind certain types of integration strategies in general, are all aimed at changing Black people. The underlying assumptions are that the problems are the Black people and that solutions will therefore succeed only when Blacks have been taught in the ways of the white counterparts.

Victim-blaming, basically economically motivated, attacks problems in liberal and humanistic ways, pumps into communities inadequate money and doomed-to-failure projects and leaves the real source of problems untouched.

SUMMARY

The serious student of Black behavior must recognize the forces at work in social science inquiry. He must not only cast aside the myths and misinterpretations, but must develop a new set of tools to observe Black life styles based on their own integrity.

A distinctive Black studies approach then must be oriented

towards the development of an alternative framework within which Black behavior may be differently described, explained, and interpreted. This approach can only be generated by a new consciousness which moves one to adequately and accurately explore, interpret, organize and implement positive action towards the growth and development of Black people (16).

THE BLACK FAMILY: SOME COMMON THREADS

" ...There is no single uniform style of Black family life, not even in the most depressed sections of the urban ghetto. But if there is non complete uniformity, there is also not random variety. There are patterns and modalities of life which are eminently tied to the basic conditions of life -- both historical and contemporary..."

Andrew Billingsley, 1968

The study of the Black family must be conducted within a theoretical framework which takes into account the factors which have influenced its development and present nature. These factors, historical and contemporary, reflect the continuity of the Black cultural experience, affect the interdependent relationship of the family with the wider society, and account for the variability among Black life styles.

HISTORICAL

The majority of Blacks in this country today share a common history distinguishable by three characteristics: (1) Blacks came from Africa,* (2) Blacks came in chains and were unrooted from their traditional culture, and (3) from slavery times until the present, Blacks have been systematically excluded from the major institutions in this society. These circumstances provide a common history from which one can view the retentions and adaptations of Black family life.

African Backgrounds

African backgrounds offer certain information about a philosophy of life as well as behavior characteristics and patterns of organization.

*not all Black people trace their origin to Africa nor have a history of North American slavery and therefore would be excluded from these catagories.

Pierre Erny (10) presents a picture of African philosophy through his inquiry into the special social psychology of the African child. The African world or cosmos is like a spider web: it is interdependent and all connected. Everything cooperates to make up a unity. The child is seen in relation to everything: everything he acts on and which acts on him must be discovered.

Everything in the universe has an invisible side, serving as its essence. The ultimate reality is not that which is provided by our senses, but that which is located in the depths of mystery. The earth is the source of power, soul, or fruitfulness and this common origin gathers everything together in a single system -- vegetation, animals, and men. There is a brotherhood between man and the universe that is perhaps infinitely closer than western man can conceive.

The child is linked to everything in the universe that is in the process of becoming. He is accepted, respected, taken seriously, invested with special functions and carries real responsibility that makes an active contribution to the society. The child is a being of beginnings and carries the fullness of human possibilities; he is marveled at. Because he is still actually nothing, he is potentially everything. The state of childhood is characterized by a particular proximity to the divine (10 p. 57). The child is believed to possess strength and intelligence from the beginning: he has a past, a personality inherited from afar. The mother faces the newborn essentially with the attitude of adaptation to his/her needs and desires. Adult intervention is minimum. The child brings himself up in the midst of parents and peers. He learns by imitation and by participation in the daily life of the social group, in their work, conversations, rites, and games. Actual instruction is often negligible. Education is acquired in life and through life (10 p. 212).

The family is the center of the universe. It is not the solitary and abstract man who is the image of the world, but the socialized and fecund man: the procreative man. Though families vary, the clan is considered a total being whose continuity, survival, and consistency must be insured. Having descendents therefore is a vital necessity for the individual. Marriage between a man and a woman represents the union of two lineages for procreation. An African woman is not really a woman until she becomes a mother. The affective reasons are secondary to the ontological reasons: one must become an ancestor in order to exercise influence over his descendants.

Belief in various forms of reincarnation are widespread and represent a reflection of the interconnectedness of things, as death engenders life and life is a source of death. But in addition to the souls of ancestors, there are in the universe multitudes of other powers likely to animate a human embroyo: within the spirits of the

waters, mountains, trees, and caverns. The environment is life-giving (10).

The patterns of West African life reported by Billingsley include certain behavior characteristics which reflect this philosophy. Men assume a dominant but not exploitive role within the family and society; women have a substantial and respected place. Kinship patterns are very distinct and marriage unites two families with a network of kin which has considerable influence on the family as well as responsibility to the family. Three basic forms of descent are found: matrilineal, patrilineal, and double descent. There are also corresponding patterns of residence and household organization (2).

In the care and protection of children, the father plays a very important role. Even where the custom or laws give the father no authority over the children, or where they cannot inherit from the father, his caretaking role is manifested in his actual relationship with the children within the family. He is almost universally responsible for the moral, economic, and civic training of the children. The mother-child relationship is paramount. Other relatives have distinct and prescribed roles and responsibilities toward the children, as well as siblings towards each other. The grandparents have the most revered place within the family: their status is the greatest importance within the whole social system because they stand between ordinary citizens and the ancestors. They have many special priviledges such as naming the children. They teach family history, folklore, proverbs, and other traditional lore. They are recognized as the living links with the past.

African Retentions

Certainly present day Black American family life is not a direct copy of African life, either past or present. The existence of various forms of retention, however, is increasingly becoming documented by current writers. Robert Hill discusses strengths of Black families which suggest strong parallels with an African value system. The strengths he cites include a strong sense of protection among family members generated by historically strong kinship bonds, characterized by frequent "informal adoptions" and care for the aged within the household. Black families are also achievement oriented in the sense that children are pushed by their families to gain survival skills and contribute to the progress of the collective body, emphasizing that achievement of the individual is dependent upon achievement of the race as a whole. The family instills a sense of mastery, a quest for achievement, and a desire to attain interpersonal and technical skills in order to function in the world (14).

The study of present day Afro-American communication is an area which suggests strong African cultural retentions. Sheilia Mayers (19) states that besides the structural similarities with African languages in terms of word formation and organization, the Afro-American system of communication and expression also represents the use of a common Black cognitive scheme based on the intuitive-

synthetic African philosophical foundations, accomodated to a different lexical scheme (English). Complimentary to this synthesis are the use of analogy and indirection, the incorporation of rhythm as a vital expressive dimension, the call and response system, the integration of the African time system, and the proclivity for movement and change.

In Mayers' interpretation, the analogic mode represents the expression of the perception of relationships or connections between events and experiences and on using one reference system to explain or illustrate another, as evidenced in folk tales, proverbs, and parables. Indirection presents a pointed message indirectly; it is incumbent upon the recipient of the message to identify its significance to him. It too uses an alternate reference system for specific events. Call and response reflects a relatedness in communication, a reciprocity, and the communal nature of the universe. The rhythm of Black language reflects the rhythms of the natural order. Interpersonal communication flows with repetitions, multiple negations, gestures, and tonal punctuations that defy literary form. The time element is focused on the ongoing progressive qualities of time as opposed to the past-present-future fixed time sequences, represented by the altered form of the verb "to be" used to create a kind of extended present.* Movement and change is evidenced by the ever-changing vernacular.

SLAVERY

The physical uprooting of Africans into a European dominated setting was disruptive to cultural development because the European genesis of culture was alien to the Africans. Many men were forced to come without their families, and Africans from different tribal customs were thrown together. Under other circumstances, where a cultural group migrates to a different country, the process of acculturation or adaptation is determined to a great extent by the migrating group. However, Blacks were not only cut off from their past, but were given no choice in a process of assimilation. Black family life was, on the surface, wholly dependent on the economic and personal interests of the white man. Black men were used for breeding, Black women were separated from their children, marriages were legally prevented, women were sexually used by their masters, and men denied the roles of husbands and fathers. These and other practices were designed to accustom the Black man to rigid discipline, demand from him unconditional submission, impress upon him his innate inferiority, develop in him a paralyzing fear of white men, train

* "He be working" implies that he is working always as if continuing or habitual. "He working" implies he is working right now.

him to adopt the master's code of good behavior, and instill in him a sense of complete dependence (2).

Impact of the Slavery Experience

Below the surface of Black family life, other dynamic forces were at work. The magnitude and effects of Black people's defiant rejection of the slavery condition has yet to be fully documented. Angela Davis (8) for example, looks at the role of the Black woman during slavery in terms of the dynamics of the position that she was placed in. The Black woman was stripped of her femininity and placed on the labor market just as the Black man was. She, however, was responsible for her own household, but unlike her feminine white counterpart, did not lead that role with passive resistence. The Black woman having experienced the pain of subjugation, and having experienced the same need as men to challenge their condition, could nurture within the family the thrust towards freedom and build a consciousness of resistence.

Also part of the slavery experience were the restrictions that were put on slaves and the impact which they had in allowing the retention of traditional African cultural beliefs and patterns of thinking. Even though the uprooting process was a continual disruption to personal family ties, the African philosophical notion of the preservation of the tribe allowed families to be defined to include the whole community. The breakup therefore, of the nuclear units during slavery did not destroy the Black family; it only forced its continuing reorganization (23).

Slavery then, in some ways, strengthened the role of the family in cultural transmission. That which remains of Black culture has been passed on through the family in that neither the school system nor any other institution in wider society has made any attempt to do so. In fact, despite the conscious efforts to lose, steal, or destroy that which has represented culture to Blacks, much has survived. It is my opinion that this represents the ultimate testimony to the functioning of the Black family and especially to the strength and functional nature of its system of communication.

Discussions about the effects of slavery would indeed be lengthy if the many aspects of economic exploitation and cultural dispossession that became necessary to justify such a system were discussed. More important is the understanding that once slavery was legislatively terminated, the economic and psychological oppression continued, and in the form of racism in general, became an ideology in the sense that the lives of people were invested in maintaining the status quo. The reality then, for Blacks of their interrelationships with wider society became characterized by lack of educational access, political powerlessness, poverty, unemployment, segregation and discrimination.

CONTEMPORARY FORCES

Racism, basically, comprises the primary factor which has served to exclude Blacks from full and equal participation in this society. To a great extent, its many manifestations serve to influence the structural and functional nature of Black life. By way of example, several critical areas will be discussed.

Family Function

All families must be responsible for the functions placed on them by wider society and must meet the needs of their members. The degree to which they can do this is a measure of family functioning. Some functions are instrumental (serving to maintain the basic physical and social integrity of the family i.e., food, shelter, and health.) They are controlled to a great extent by access to opportunity and support. Other functions are expressive (designed to maintain and enhance the socio-emotional relationships.) The family's ability to execute these functions and the nature in which it executes these functions will be influenced by society as a whole and how supportive it is.

James Comer and Alvin Poussaint discuss the various dimensions of child rearing in Black families (7). They state that even though it is the responsibility of all parents to help their children develop in a way that will equip them to function well as family members and citizens, parents are only willing to do this when they have a sense of belonging in the larger society. Belonging happens when the rights of parents are protected and obstacles to earning a living and respect are not placed in their way; it provides a sense of security and makes it easy and right for parents to accept values and ways of society and pass them on to their children. Since Blacks must fight for their respect, it is not always easy for them to accept those values. As long as authority lies in the hands of "others" in this society, Blacks feel ambivalent about their ability to protect their children.

Phyllis Harrison-Ross and Barbara Wyden discuss childrearing issues in their guide for parents (13). They too stress that raising Black children requires a special kind of consciousness raising in order to overcome the realities of the world and create a positive environment for Black children. They discuss the results of racism in terms of the fight that minorities must wage to overcome the distortion in image that has been perpetuated by the harsh inequities in history, many of which affect the way Blacks feel about themselves. Black children must cope with family feelings of being different and discriminated against -- of rage and pride. Black children are born to face the fight to conquer white hostility. Black parents face this task of instilling courage and confidence to help

their children grow up liberated in mind.

It becomes a necessity in raising Black children to talk about race: to understand the gradations in skin color and the ambivalent messages about Black is Beautiful; to talk about being Black in a white place; to discuss rejection, anger, separation and pride; to discuss myths and realities; and more. As James Comer has said: we must keep our children focused on race relations and responding to racial issues. Racism is like rain: when it's not falling, it's somewhere forming (6).

The functioning of individual family members in terms of roles is characterized by considerable flexibility. Masculine and feminine behavior is not fundamentally determined by attachment to particular responsibilities as much as it is judged by the quality of one's behavior (28).

Family Structure

Various complex dynamics work to determine the structure of a particular Black family including tradition, personal choice, economics, societal pressures, etc. In general, however, Andrew Billingsley has identified three broad categories of Black families: primary, extended, and augmented. Nuclear or primary families include husband and wife and their own children and no other persons present. Extended families include other relatives of the family head, and augmented families include members not related to the family head who share the household. It is important to recognize that Billingsley defines a family as a group of persons related by marriage or ancestry who live together in the same household. Though under the analytic microscope of social science inquiry one finds types and subtypes, each is a family. The dynamics of that group then, must be viewed from within the family structure, whatever it might be, rather that from without, based on some static or concrete constructs.

The Black Community as an Ethnic Subsociety

The Black community has various institutions which may be viewed as subsystems, in that they form units of interaction and interdependence with wider society (churches, taverns, beauty parlors, etc.). Each of these institutions is important given the social orientation of Black people. The coming together and sharing with each other in a harmonious manner represents the rhythmic flow between self and others. There is a real sense of participation that permeates Black group settings (2).

"Subsociety" reflects the fact, according to Billingsley, that the dimensions of life for Blacks and their implications cannot be compared with the same dimensions in wider society. Middle-class Blacks cannot be compared with middle-class non-Blacks. For Black people, the ethnic group is the locus of historical identification,

while the ethclass (the intersection of ethnic group and social class), is the locus of a sense of participational identification. People of the same ethnic group but different social class share a sense of peoplehood but not behavioral similarities, while people of the same social class and different ethnic groups may share behavioral similarities but do not share a sense of peoplehood (2). Participational identification includes priviledges, opportunities and resources; historical identification refers to history, status, and economic security.

Social class has a special meaning among Blacks: it does not provide an accurate picture or description of who associates with whom, although it tells who looks up or down on whom. It provides no descriptive implications for telling about behavior, values or preferences, styles of life, or childrearing patterns. These patterns are more related to cultural continuities. Social class is more valuable as a description of the basic life conditions of the subjects (2), and as an index of economic position or of level in the community. Social class status tells you that the higher it is, the higher that family's access to the resources of the wider society, the greater the level of support, and the greater the family's ability to meet the requirements and needs of its members.

SUMMARY

The racial history of African-Americans provides information about traditional life styles and ethos which have influenced Black family patterns today. Adaptation and assimilation through a historical presence in this country gives further insights into these patterns. In the end, however, it is the wider society, with its forces and its systems, its political, economic, educational and social institutions, which influence each individual family based on its participation. Depending upon geographic location, educational achievement, household composition, religious affiliation, and a whole host of other factors, the implications of these influences make for an infinite variety of individual lifestyles.

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Ruth Robinson

EDUCATION AS CULTURAL IMPERIALISM OR CULTURAL DEMOCRACY: THE CHALLENGE TO BLACK EDUCATION

INTRODUCTION

Significant efforts to identify and articulate the assumptions underlying the development of educational programs for young Black, and other ethnic minority children were initiated in the social science literature of the late 1960's. Never before had the "political and academic furor over the efficacy - and therefore the future of early intervention and compensatory programs, such as Head Start,"[1] been so intense.

Review of the literature yields two distinct and polarized models for interpreting the behavior of the Black child, and developing educational strategies to meet his/her needs.

The first model assumes as its ideological base a "deficit" view of the Black child's culture and capabilities. The ". . .intervention approach tacitly labels Negro behavior as pathological,"[2] and prescribes linguistic, cognitive and social compensatory tactics to minimize or eradicate the "inherent deficits." Cultural patterns, other than those of mainstream, middle-class white Americans are viewed as interfering with or injurious to the intellectual and emotional development of the child[3] (Castaneda, Ramirez, Cortez and Barrera, 1971). Intervention programs of the 60's were designed to expedite "assimilation" of behaviors and values of the idealized American norm,"[4] diminishing or eliminating cultural difference, and hence, enabling the child to "succeed" along with his/her mainstream peers.

The socio-political ideology of intervention programs was and continues to be actively changed by the second model, which presents a "viable alternative" to the ethnocentric views held by the "genetic inferiority" and "social pathology" models.[5]

Data collected by scholars which support the "cultural difference" model, receive a cultural interpretation which recognize the unique and legitimate linguistic, cognitive and interpersonal styles of the culturally different child (Baratz and Baratz, 1969, Stewart, 1964, Dillard, 1972, Labov, 1969, Ramirez, 1971, Hilliard, 1974). This model rejects "the attempts by educational institutions to mold children of minority ethnic backgrounds to conform to the middle-class mainstream model."[6] Intervention to compensate for

"deficits" in the child are replaced with mandates for "intervention" in current early childhood program practices which fail to reflect consideration of the unique styles of culturally different children in their curriculum materials, teaching strategies, assessment instruments and procedures.

The ideology of educational programs and the resultant influences on development and delivery of services to children and families is still a critical issue today, when examining the quality and effectiveness of local state, regional and national "programming" for young Black children.[7]

The literature, however, has yet to consolidate data on linguistic, cognitive and social behavioral patterns of Black children offered by both the "cultural deficit" and "cultural different" models, so that readers may contrast the socio-political ideologies and resultant educational strategies of each. This is an ambitious, but sorely needed contribution.

This paper will attempt to initiate an effort toward this consolidation and analysis, but will limit its reporting to the following objectives:

1) a selective review of the social science literature on the linguistic and cognitive paeterns of Black children presented by the "deficit model" as the rationale for intervention and compensatory programs. While it is necessary to examine both language and cognitive assessments in the literature, the addition of vast research on the social skills or styles of Black children (e.g., self-concept, incentive-motivational styles, human-relational styles) are excluded from this investigation; a more comprehensive work of the scope earlier mentioned is urged by the author.

2) to contrast these data with current social science research which provides alternative frameworks for interpretation of Black communication patterns and learning styles.

3) to discuss how these distinct and polarized ideologies influence the educational strategies of programs for young Black children.

SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH AND BLACK CULTURE: BACKGROUND

It is naive to expect that much of the literature assessing the language and cognitive behavior of the Black child would be free of the view that Blacks are inferior.

Historically, in American society, "the doctrine of genetic inferiority was a widely held view. In fact, it was not

> until the 1954 Supreme Court decision concerning segregation in public schools that the institutional tradition of regarding the Negro as genetically inferior was legally replaced by the notion that the Negro was not genetically inferior but rather that his behavior was pathological in the social sense, due to the history of slavery in this country," and existing conditions of poverty and discrimination.[8]

We see that the glaringly racist view of genetic inferiority was replaced by the more "liberal, well meaning" social pathology or problem-oriented analysis of Black behavior. Wilkerson stated, "It was no longer respectable in professional circles to attribute substandard performance among large population groups, in school or elsewhere, to presumed inadequacies in their genetic equipment."[9]

> "But both the genetic model and the social pathology model postulate that something is wrong with the black American. For the traditional racists, that something is transmitted by the genetic code; for the ethnocentric social pathologists, that something is transmitted by the family. The major difference . . . lies in the attribution of causality, not in the analysis of the behaviors observed as sick, pathological, deviant, or underdeveloped."[10]

In their current book, Racism and Psychiatry, Thomas and Sillen thoroughly examine the role of the social sciences in describing societal groups not as they are, but ways in which they deviate from a normative system defined by the white middle class. The postulation of such a norm, of course, underscores a pervasive but too often unconfronted assumption," . .that to be different from whites is to be inferior."[11]

Not only has much of the research on Blacks failed to examine its own ethnocentric or racist bias, it has perpetuated the assumption that ". . .there is no such thing as Negro culture."[12] When stating that ". . .the Negro is only an American and nothing else - without values and a culture to guard and protect,"[13] Glazer and Moynihan (1963) epitomize the social scientists ignorance and rejection of the significance of historical African influences in contemporary Black American family life (Staples, 1974, Shimkin, 1974, Nobles, 1974), linguistic patterns (Stewart, 1969, Dillard, 1972,), and learning styles (Hilliard, 1974, Weems, 1974).

Most of the literature on the Black man has sorely missed the insightful early observations of Melville Herskovits (1938-39) when discussing culturally related behavioral differences,[14]

> (We need to recognize the existence of). . .the historical background of the . . .behavioral differences. . .being studied and

> those factors which make for . . .their . . .existence, and perpetuation. When, for instance, one sees vast programs of Negro education undertaken without the slightest consideration given even to the possibility of some retention of African habits of thought and speech that might influence the Negroes' reception of the instruction thus offered - one cannot but ask how we hope to reach the desired objectives. When we are confronted with psychological studies of race relations made in utter ignorance of characteristic African patterns of motivation and behavior or with sociological analyses of Negro family life which make not the slightest attempt to take into account even the chance that the phenomenon being studied might in some way have been influenced by the carry-over of certain African traditions, we can but wonder about the value of such work. (Herskovits, 1938-1939, p. 121)

Baratz and Baratz (1970) agree that " . . .social science has refused to look beyond the surface similarities between Negro and white behavior and, therefore, has dismissed the idea of subtle yet enduring differences...in the absence of an ethno-historical perspective..."[15]

Professor Cedric X (Clark) (1972) further clarifies the dilemma when he argues for ". . .an epistemological differentiation between the study of Black people and Black studies. The study of Black people takes as its interpretive framework the nature of non-Black people while Black studies should take as its interpretative framework the nature of Black people."[16]

Let's now specifically focus on the premises operating in research on language and cognitive assessment of "disadvantaged"* Black children. Subsequently, the paper will demonstrate how compensatory and intervention programs subscribe to and perpetuate these assumptions inherent in the "deficit" model of the Black child, and initiate strategies to ameliorate these inferred deficits.

THE SOCIAL PATHOLOGY MODEL: A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Two recurring assumptions which become operationalized in data gathering of language and cognitive behavior of Black children are

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*"Disadvantaged" or culturally deprived," in the literature of the social pathologists implies being deprived of middle-class experiences, values, lifestyles - an internal condition. "Disadvantaged" may also refer to those who are severly, economically impoverished and deprived of many opportunities due to poverty and discrimination - an externally imposed condition. It is also used in this paper to describe the real "disadvantage" a child faces operating in an unfamiliar and nonsupportive environment.

discussed by Joan and Stephen Baratz (1968, 1969) and Kenneth Johnson (1971). The first assumption equates linguistic competence with Standard English usage.

> "Because of their ethnocentric bias, both the social pathologists and the genetic racists have wrongly presumed that linguistic competence is synonymous with the development of standard English and, thus, they incorrectly interpret the different, yet highly abstract and complex, non-standard vernacular used by Negroes as evidence of linguistic incompetence or underdevelopment (Baratz, J., 1969). Both share the view that to speak any linguistic system other than standard English is to be deficient and inferior, . . .and the misguided egalitarian is forced into testing a racist assumption that some languages are better than others." [17]

Although it is widely believed that most children have acquired basic competence in the linguistic system of their primary language community before they enter school, (Strickland, 1962, Loban, 1966), Black, "disadvantaged" and poor children are seldom recognized as having the same competence in language as white children when they enter school.[18]

Thus, the literature is replete with descriptions of the economically disadvantaged Black child's language as; "non verbal," "underdeveloped," "sloppy," "simplified," etc., as perceived by their teachers. The psychologists' and educators' measure of language development were measures based on Standard English (Bereiter, 1965; Thomas, 1962; Deutsch, 1964; Klaus and Gray, 1968).[20] "While psychologists and educators are frequently guilty of this bias, linguists assume that any verbal system used by a community to meet the requirements of that community is a language and that no language is structurally better than any other language, (i.e., French is no better than German, Yiddish is no better than Gaelic.)"[21]

The pathological interpretations of differences (from Standard English) found in nonstandard usage are supported in the studies and hypotheses of C. Deutsch (1964), M. Deutsch (1969), B. Bernstein (1961) and C. Bereriter and S. Englemann (1966). Proponents of this view direct their attention to <u>how</u> and <u>why</u> nonstandard cultures differ from the norm.

The pathological interpretation usually begins its argument with the poor performance of culturally different children, usually economically disadvantaged, on tests that make verbal demands on them, and are not standardized on this population. When this performance is contrasted with that of children who belong to the "standard" mainstream culture (Standard English speakers) the difference is inferred or assessed as the result of an "insufficient or underdeveloped linguistic system."[22]

> "It is no wonder then, that Cynthia Deutsch (1964) should find in her assessment of auditory discrimination that disadvantaged black children did not 'discriminate' as well as white children from middle class linguistic environments. She administered a discrimination task that equated 'correct responses' with judgments of equivalences and differences in standard English sound usage. Many of her stimuli though different ot the standard English speaker, i.e., pin-pen, are similar to the Negro nonstandard speaker. She attributed the difference in performance of disadvantaged children to such things as the constant blare of the TV in their homes and there being so much "noise" in their environment that the children tended to "tune out." However, black children make responses based on the kind of language they consider appropriate. In the same way that cot - for sleeping, caught - for ensnared, or marry - to wed, Mary - the girl, and merry - to be happy are not distinguished in the speech of many white people (so that they would say on an auditory discrimination test that cot and caught were the same) - pin and pen are the same in the language of ghetto blacks. The responses that the black child makes are on the basis of the sound usage that he has learned in his/her social and geographical milieu, and do not reflect some difficulty in discriminating."[23]

The second assumption shared ". . .by both the social pathologists and the genetic racists (is) that one's linguistic competence is a measure of one's intellectual capacity,"[24] The implications for the Black Dialect speaker are obvious to Johnson (1971).

> Many educators, sociologists, psychologists and others believe that the nonstandard Negro dialect black children speak impairs their cognitive development. Stated another way, nonstandard Negro dialect is a reflection of inadequate cognitive development of disadvantaged black children. The crux of this point of view is: because nonstandard Negro dialect is different from standard English, it must be inferior to standard English . . .and since language is essential to cognition an inferior language must impair cognitive development of those who speak it. This is the basis for those who adhere to the cognitive deficiency point of view.[25]

Causality for these "deficits" is seen to be directly related either to genetic or environmental influences. Either one or both of these forces act upon those of the "nonstandard" culture to create the "problems" associated with being "disadvantaged" (not performing according to the norm standard).

The work of Bernstein (1961) proposed distinct verbal modes of

communication existing within lower-class and middle-class families of Great Britain. Labeling the language code of the poor "restricted," he contended that it employs a limited vocabulary, condensed or abbreviated syntax, and a constricted range and detail of concepts. The "elaborated" code of the middle-class is synonomous with the Standard English. It is presented as employing a wide and complex vocabulary and syntax and is primarily concerned with cognitive elaboration.[26]

According to Bernstein, the elaborated code of the middle-class permits a wider range of complex thought than the restricted code of the lower-class, thus it better supports cognitive development and abstraction.[27]

Although Bernstein currently refutes his American interpreters (Hess, 1964, Deutsch, 1967, Caldwell, 1968, Gordon, 1968), who interpret the restricted code used by poor proplr as a "deficit" style that is identified with and reinforces their "cultural disadvantage," he still asserts that the restricted code does serve to perpetuate the family, social organization and culture of poverty peoples.[29]*

Several researchers have made adaptations of Bernstein's theories on differences in language style between lower and middle class speakers, and have attempted to ". . .concretize these hypotheses into categories of language behavior that directly imply restrictions in cognitive ability."[30] (Hess, et. al 1968, M. Deutsch, 1967, Bereirter and Engelmann, 1966.)

In a paper by Joan Baratz, "Language and Cognitive Assessment of Negro Children -- Assumptions and Research Needs," she challenges that ". . .as interesting as Bernstein's hypotheses about language style differences of diverse socioeconomic groups may be, the relationship of particular linguistic usage on the one hand, and conceptual ability on the other, has yet to be determined."[28] (Baratz, 1968)

J. Baratz goes on to expose the "faulty notions" of these researchers who would ". . .view differences in language structure and language style as manifestations of underlying differences in cognitive ability."[31]

> For example, Bereiter and Englemann (1966) hold as one of the cardinal cognitive needs of the child the learning of conditionality as measured by the use of "if" constructions.

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* The "culture of poverty," or "cycle of poverty," was the eminent interest of many social scientists in the 60s, particularly, anthropologist Oscar Lewis. In his works and others, the characteristics of the poor were thought to be the source of their poverty and depressed state.

> They assume that the absence of "if" by a child indicates an absence in which the concept of conditionality is absent. However, Stewart and other linguists have described the fact that in some non-standard dialects of English such as Negro non-standard, conditionality may be expressed by the use of a word order inversion rather than with the vocabulary item "if." Thus, conditionality is expressed in the statement I ask Alvin did he want to go by changing he plus verb to did he plus verb, even though in standard English the same kind of conditionality would be expressed with "if -- e.g., "I asked Alvin if he wanted to go."[32]

She provides another example to suggest that different usages of vocabulary items, as well as syntax, ". . .may lead to confusion on the part of the examiner so that he feels the child is lacking in a particular concept."[33]

> "For example, the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test has an item that asks children to identify "building"; the correct response being the picture of men constructing an edifice. However, in Negro non-standard vernacular "building" is used only as a noun (one makes an edifice) so that the child will not respond to that item in the expected way. (There are other aspects about the PPVT which are culturally biased against the black child.)"[34]

Martin Deutsch (1963) saw members of the "disadvantaged" as products of their "destitute environment." His research was grounded on the norm of the mainstream as a reference point against which all behavior was measured. Performance was described as it deviated from this "idealized norm" and differences in behavior, intelligence and cognitive ability of Black children were attributed to the negative effects of slavery, poverty, discrimination, "broken homes," and "inadequate mothering." He stated:

> In observations of lower-class homes, it appears that speech sequences seem to be temporarily very limited and poorly structured syntactically. It is thus not surprising to find that a major focus of deficit in the children's language development is syntactical organization and subject continuity. (Deutsch, 1963, p. 174)[35]

Green (1964) agrees with the deficit orientation of the social pathologists:

> The very inadequate speech that is used in the home is also used in the neighborhood, in the play group, and in the classroom. Since these poor English patterns are reconstructed constantly by the associations that these young people have,

the school has to play a strong role in bringing about a change in order that these young people can communicate more adequately in our society. (Green, 1964, p. 123)[36]

Theorists who concur with Deutsch and others argue that an impoverished environment leads to an underdeveloped language system, which in turn has a deletrious effect on cognitive performance. It appears that their "evidence" rests weightily on two assumptions earlier examined, namely, the ethnocentric assumption that a language system can be underdeveloped, and the yet to be documented relationship between linguistic style and cognitive ability. Much research has indeed assessed the linguistic and cognitive performance of Black children (via instruments and procedures whose cultural validity are questionable), but clearly not the cognitive capability of these children. The deficit people confuse a lack of "school vocabulary" with a lack of a language system.

The "inadequate mother hypothesis,"[37] postulated as a cause of "linguistic and cognitive deficits," proliferated the literature of educational psychology in the '60s. Because it has had significant influences on intervention and compensatory programs for Black children and families, it will be mentioned here, but only briefly.

It is initially important to keep in mind the notion of the "cognitively and linguistically deprived child," that the previous review of social pathology literature has yielded, because the "inadequate mother hypothesis" was created to account for the "deficits" which in actuality do not exist, ". . .that is, that ghetto mothers produce linguistically and cognitively impaired children who cannot learn."[38]

The literature has focused on the mother-child interaction patterns of Blacks in the lower (or middle) socioeconomic strata of society, (e.g., social and sensory stimulation, Hunt, 1961, Kagan, 1968, Deutsch, C., 1968; communication to the child of the importance of school achievement, Hess, et. al., 1968; and teaching styles, Hess Shipman, Brophy, and Bear, 1968).

Consistent with the social pathology model, then, the recurrent procedure is to document the differences in lower-class and middle class child rearing practices, differences which clearly exist, and then mistakenly conclude that these differences cause the child to be deficient.

"THE DEFICIT MODEL": EDUCATIONAL STRATEGIES

Consistent with this socio-political ideology, the rationale of early approaches to compensatory education was based on the hypothesis of "deprivation" -- linguistic, cognitive, social, hence, cultural:

"The academic failure and progressive retardation so common among children of the poor was mainly a function of their early socialization under conditions of poverty and discrimination. Deprived of preschool experiences essential for normative cognitive and affective development, these children entered school poorly equipped for academic work; and the function of special programs of compensatory was to 'make up' for their socially-induced handicaps. The origins of impoverished pupils' academic problems were mainly sociological not biological. On this, there was at the beginning - and there continues to be - a broad concensus among professional advocates of compensatory education."[39]

As we look to the literature of various intervention and compensatory programs, the "cultural deprivation" model is preeminent:

"Most of us are familiar with the general deficiences of Head Start children, as a group. We know that they typically have missed out on many important learning experiences, and are behind in language, information and ability to think abstractly, not very skillful in using materials or in relating to other people; and many of them, probably quite realistically feel inadequate in coping with their world. A striking proportion of these children are passive, uninvolved, and apprehensive rather than curious about their world. It seems that the general impoverishment of their lives has left them lagging behind other children in almost every area of development -- physical health, dentition, IQ, speech, vocabulary, concept formation, reasoning, trust in adults, and self-confidence."[40]

A specific reference to the language development of Head Start children states:

"Most. . .though certainly not all . . .are deficient in language. Many of the children speak very little -- they don't initiate conversations even though they may sit on your lap and listen to you read; they don't respond verbally to questions but rather smile or nod or point instead; they don't seem to understand directions which involve doing one task after another. As these children grow, many of them will learn an impoverished and superficial language . . .in this restricted language it is difficult to express intentions or describe new experiences or to explain that there are special qualifications . . .to devise new ways of combining and recombining old words and phrases into new structures which carry new meaning. . .the restricted language is like sending smoke signals . . .there has to be an agreed upon meaning for each puff."[41]

One might expect that the two previous references to Head Staft children would be descriptive of those in severely economically impoverished rural areas in the South, one of the major targets of the "War on Poverty." (Urban ghettos were, of course, the other.) The references were made, however, by Head Start program evaluators, Margaret and William Faust, of children in San Bernadino County, California!

Although the initial efforts of early childhood educators in the '60s were primarily adaptations of nursery school programs emphasizing social education and enrighment approaches, ". . .these approaches were rapidly complemented by isolated efforts to provide 'concentrated' instruction designed for particular academic and cognitive deficiences."[42]

Several objectives of the Head Start program outlined in their literature are concerned with children "in a disadvantaged position with respect to national norms for the standardized tests of language development and scholastic achievement."[43]

Rather than examining this dilemma from the perspective of test validity,* their "intervention strategies" sought to change or rehabilitate the child and his cultural environment:

> . . ."offering intervention programs of longer duration, perhaps extending downward toward infancy and upward into the primary grades."
>
> . . ."concentrating on the remediation of specific deficiencies . . .e.g., language deficiencies, deficiencies in spelling or arithmetic."
>
> . . ."training of parents to becore more effective teachers of their children."[44]

An early preschool intervention program (Klaus and Gray, 1968) was initiated at George Peabody College for Teachers, in 1959. This program, later called the "Early Training Project for Disadvantaged Children," provided a ten week intervention program for disadvantaged Black children in the South prior to entering first grade. It sought to ". . .develop attitudes conducive to school achievement (achievement, motivation, persistence, delay of gratification, interest in school

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*A great deal of work is currently being done in the area of test bias and the culturally different child.

activities), and enhance certain intellectual abilities, particularly concept formation and the development of language."[45] Small hopes of the effectiveness of the intervention experiment were raised due to slight gains of experimental group (8 points) on the Binet and Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test (PPVT). However, when no differences in test scores were found between experimental and control groups on the Metropolitan Achievement Test at the end of the first grade, the investigators were forced to conclude that ". . .the intervention program was too short and too late for maximum effect."[46]

The "Early Training Project" (1961-1966) presents another social pathology interpretation of low income Black culture as its program rationale:

> "Aversive elements of the low-income home may be grouped into those elements which pertain to physical aspects of the environment and those elements that pertain to social aspects. Low income homes are characterized by noise and disorder, probably providing a great deal of gross stimulus input, but the range and variety of stimuli is limited. Spatial and temporal organization is hampered by disorganization and lack of opportunity to process information. Families are more likely to be broken, and the important mother figure probably has a low educational level, is often pregnant, is frequently absent and utilizes a restricted language code. Consequently, the child does not learn to use language effectively. He is expected to practice withdrawing and passive behavior rather than active exploration. The major tasks of this program (is) to begin with the motivational patterns present, to move gradually to establish patterns more adaptive to success in school, and to develop situations, materials, and techniques along with the skills needed to accompany motivational changes."[47]

"Classic" interventionist assumptions and tactics crystallize in the Academic Preschool of Carl Bereiter and Siegfreid Englemann (1964-1968) at the University of Illinois. The elements of their program rationale are as follows:

> "1) By the age of three or four, disadvantaged children are already seriously behind other children in the development of aptitudes necessary for success in school."
>
> "2) Disadvantaged children must somehow "catch up" in the development of these abilities, or they will enter elementary school with handicaps that will spell failure for a large percentage of them and a limited future for all of them."
>
> "3) If they are to catch up, they must progress at a faster than normal rate."

"4) A preschool program that provides the usual opportunities for learning cannot be expected to produce learning at above normal rates."

"5) A short term preschool program cannot be expected to produce above normal gains in all areas of development at once: a 'well-rounded' program is therefore incompatible with the goal of catching up; selectivity is necessary."[48]

Among the assumptions of Marion Blank and Frances Solomon's (1968) tutorial language program for "socially disadvantaged" children, are the following which specifically speak to changing the child's language:

"Deprived preschool children do not have a firm language base for thinking. They will develop only if they are consistently guided. This leads to the further assumption that the most effective teaching is based on individual tutoring."

"The new command of language will allow the child to cope more effectively with an otherwise debilitating environment. Therefore, marked improvements in many aspects of maladaptive behavior should occur."[49]

Several other intervention and compensatory efforts might be memtioned here to indicate the influences of the social pathology model on programs for young Black children. However, in conclusion, a common strategy can be identified in these programs, "enrichment" and instructional programming" alike. That is, an attempt, ". . .to make up for the impoverished environment of the children concerned by providing them with the experiences considered essential to the development of an ordinary middle-class child."

The "problems of the poor," and specifically low school achievement, rests clearly in the "linguistic and cognitive deficiences" of the poor. This attitude "maintains that the culturally different child is not only lagging behind mainstream children in intellectual and emotional development, but also that the reason for this deficiency is the fact that his culture has had a negative effect, an injurious effect upon his development "[50]

The culturally different child must change his/her values and lifestyles. The process is one of making the culturally different less different. Under the guise of liberation and self-improvement, the predetermined values of the mainstream are superimposed on culturally different peoples.

S. Engelmann has made a statement which starkly testifies to the assumptions and issues inherent in intervention programs: "There is no

way to have education without conformity . . .the process is generally one of modifying behavior to meet specific standards . . ." By "standards" Engelmann means mainstream standards.

LINGUISTIC AND COGNITIVE ASSESSMENT: AN ALTERNATIVE APPROACH

There are scholars, however, who see their task in social science research as one of exposing the ethnocentric biases of the "deficit" view, and challenging the practices of "institutional racism."[52] The works of Baratz and Baratz (1969) and Thomas and Sillen (1972) have been previously mentioned.

Others present an alternative interpretation of the linguistic and cognitive behaviors of Black children (Baratz and Baratz, 1968, 1969; Stewart, 1968; Labov, 1969; Dillard, 1972; Wolfram and Fasold, 1970; Hilliard, 1974; Weems, 1974). Some go on to examine the practices in educational programs which "fail to recognize or utilize existing cultural forms to teach new skills,"[53] and propose recommendations for institutional change (Baratz, 1968, 1969, K. Johnson, 1971, Ramirez, 1972, 1974).

"The cultural deprivation premise, was challenged at the outset by a small number of prominent educators and psychologists who attributed widespread academic failures among disadvantaged children to grossly inept practices in schools," namely, "negative attitudes and low expectations among professional staff, and instructional methods and materials ill-suited to their developmental needs."[54]

A characteristic response to the assertions of the theorists who proposed an impoverished environment as the cause of deprivation, would include a position aligned to this one:

> "Early socialization, under conditions of poverty and discrimination, although hardly conducive to optimum development, by no means preclude effective learning in school."[55]

Kenneth Clark, a notable Black psychologist, rejects the "cultural deprivation" position and contends:

> ". . .the rationalized cultural barriers to achievement -- sensory deficiencies, low attention span, bizarre language patterns, absence of father, and lack of books in the home-- have provided the schools with respectable rationalizations they need for maintaining the status quo."[56]

In this way, ". . .the children can be blamed, rather than the racism which permeates our educational institutions."[57]

The linguistic competence of Black children has been well documented (Stewart, 1968; Labov and Cohen, 1967; Labov, 1969;

Dillard, 1969, Baratz, 1969; Wolfram, 1969). These investigations report, ". . .a well ordered, highly structured, but different dialect from that of standard English."[58]

Differences between Standard English and Black Dialect* occur to varying degrees in their phonological and grammatical systems, vocabulary or lexicon, intonation (range of tonal patterns), and stylized, figurative language (sometimes called "slang").

The scope of the present paper does not include a comprehensive analysis of the history and linguistic features of Black Dialect. Several sources that present the history and linguistic features of Black dialect are mentioned in the bibliography, and should be consulted. However, what is to be considered in this paper are the contributions that these linguists and sociolinguists have made to the literature:

1) in recognizing, reporting and appreciating linguistic differences as aesthetically and functionally valid in their own cultural context, in the same way the mainstream has validity (only) in its own cultural context. "In encouraging Black children to replace their nonstandard Negro dialect with standard English, the schools are asking Black children to replace a functional language system with one that is non-functional in their primary language community."[59]

2) investigating the language behaviors of Black peoples within an ethno-historical perspective which identifies African influences in contemporary Black language patterns. (Stewart, Dillard, 1972)

3) in providing a systematic description of the features of Black Dialect for educators and psychologists to consider in instructional planning.

4) in reasserting that the Black Dialect speaker is not handicapped due to an underdeveloped language system, but by being required to function in a linguistically foreign context. (The difficulty is similar to that encountered by any foreign language speaker attempting to carry on transactions in language other than that in which the speaker is totally fluent.) Linguistic disadvantage created by a difference is not the same thing as a deficit.

5) in cautioning that ". . .the social pathology model has led social science to establish programs to prevent deficits which simply are not there,"[60] and that the danger of the "deficit" view lies in diverting attention away from the real defects of the educational system while focusing on the imagined defects of the child.

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*Interestingly, even in the linguistic literature these differences were initially labeled "systematic deviations," but are now more often referred to as "interferences points," particularly within the context of reading instruction.

"CULTURAL DIFFERENCE MODEL": EDUCATIONAL STRATEGIES

There are significant educational strategies consistent with "legitimizing" Black Dialect. Among those particularly significant to early childhood education are recommendations which would impact the knowledge and attitudes of classroom teachers regarding Black Dialect. Efforts to teach Standard English (as a second language), or to provide reading instruction to Black Dialect speakers, will continue to result in frustration and failure for both teacher and child, until the teacher begins to reexamine some of his or her false assumptions about both dialects.[61]

In her work on "conceptual styles, culture conflict, and nonverbal tests of intelligence,"[62] Rosalie Cohen (1965, 1969) provides some additional insights for examining the plight of the culturally different child in a "monocultural" educational environment.

> "In order to operationalize the middle-class orientation of the school the content of the ten most widely used standardized tests of intelligence and achievement were analyzed, and a sample of the researchers who develop and revise these tests were serveyed (Cohen, 1967). The object of this inquiry was to identify the generic requirements for achievement that such instruments make of the people to whom they are administered. Three types of requirement were isolated: (1) breadth and depth of general information, (2) analytic abstraction, and (3) field articulation (the ability to extract salient information from an embedding context, as in reading comprehension or in the extraction of an arithmetic problem from a word context)."[63]

Although information growth is taken for granted with increased maturity and experiences, analytic abstraction and field articulation skills, demanded in standardized tests, require a specific kind of approach to selecting and organizing information, namely, deriving analogies or "logical" relationship.

The school requires one specific approach to cognitive organization, the "analytic," which is characterized by a formal or analytic mode of abstracting and analyzing particulars from their embedded context; the meaning of things being "static." Parts or attributes of a given stimulus have meaning in themselves. Individuals operating within this "cognitive style" may be thought of as "splitters." The "relational" cognitive style, on the other hand, requires a descriptive mode abstraction and is self-centered in its orientation to reality; only the global characteristics of a stimulus have meaning. The meanings of things depends upon the situation. Individuals operating in this mode may be thought of as "lumpers."[64]

These conceptual styles, ". . .require not only different skills and approaches to selection and organization of revelant information from a stimulus or situation, but mutually incompatible ones."[65] Two sample test items, one from the "Sigel Test of Conceptual Style," and another from the Witkin Test of Graphic Field Articulation, are included in the appendix to assist the reader in identifying the differences in cognitive style.

Another study (Cohen, 1967) concluded that "the style of family and peer group organization in which children were socialized, was the most significant influence[66] in developing these early learning patterns or cognitive styles. "Analytic children had both originated in and continued to function in formally organized primary groups -- those in which group functions had been conceptually extracted, formally abstracted and assigned to status-roles within the group. Children whose preferred mode of cognitive organization was Relational had been socialized in and continued to function in "shared function" primary groups -- those in which critical functions of the group were widely shared or indiscriminantly performed, resulting in a fluid and constantly shifting distribution of functions."[67]

"Shared-function primary group organization is more common in low income environments and more common among black urban populations than in white populations, while formal organization is more common in the middle class." "Relational and Analytic conceptual styles are more common respectively in low income and middle class populations, and poor and good achievement levels follow."[68]

Examination of Cohen's data clearly yields significant "conflict" between the "expected" or "standard" analytical style of the school, and the existant, alternative, relational style of many of the children it purports to serve. The school, as it exists, tends to recognize and value only one style. The same ethnocentric biases found operating in the linguistic issue, are mirrored in the issue of conceptual styles.

Manuel Ramirez III, addresses the problem of the culturally different child in this way:

> "In many educational programs, standardized instruments, such as the Stanford Binet, are being used to evaluate the culturally different. It has been shown that most standardized instruments are in some way biased (Ramirez and Gonzales, 1971; Mercer, 1968). The language, content, and administration procedures are not appropriate for many culturally different children. Few, if any, standardized instruments currently available reflect more than one type of communication, incentive-motivational, human-relational, and learning style, obviously the style of the majority Anglo-American culture. That is, the results obtained from

use of these instruments are not actually indicative of the abilities or achievement of the children being tested. The results do show, however, that the child's performance does not conform to the style of the instrument, or the style of the institution using the instrument. The application of the results obtained from use of these measures is often modification and development of teaching strategies and curriculum materials, designing these to improve the child's performance on the measure used. That is, the institution views the child as deficient, and attempts to improve the child's performance on a particular instrument, a biased instrument, by making the child conform to the style of the institution. In short, the system, the institution does not change, but forces the child to do so."[69]

Ramirez rejects the "assimilationist" attempts of the "exclusionist melting-pot philosophy,"[70] which seeks to mold children of minority ethnic backgrounds to conform to the middle class mainstream model. He proposes instead a relatively new philosophy, "cultural democracy," which ". . .recognizes the right of the child to a bicultural identity - the right to be culturally different, to retain identification with his ethnic group, while becoming a responsible member of the larger, dominant society."[72]

The data on conceptual styles have influenced the educational strategies recommended by Ramirez and Castaneda for the Mexican - American child to include ". . .the need to evaluate teachers and institutions to determine their cognitive style in relation to their students, and then, for training to ensure that teachers can teach and relate well to all of the children in their classrooms. Educational personnel should be able to operate in both field dependent and field independent* modes, and should be trained to develop curriculum and evaluative materials in both styles."[73] Program efforts would also encourage development of the child's unfamiliar cognitive styles with a view toward achieving the goal of mental and behavioral flexibility.

It is particularly significant to note that the teaching strategies observed in Mexican-American parents in Sacramento, California and Houston, Texas (Ramirez, 1971) have been used to train and evaluate teachers in experimental classrooms of the Culturally Democratic Learning Environments Follow Through model at the University of California, Santa Cruz. (Ramirez, Cox, MaCaulay, Velasco & Dominquez, 1972, 1973, 1974). These procedures, which use the teaching styles of minority parents in planning educational programs for minority children, present a provacative challenge to those theories which contend that the "inadequate" mothering or teaching behaviors of such groups are responsible for the academic failure of their children!

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*In the literature on conceptual styles, field dependence is used synonomously with the relational cognitive style, and field independence is used synonomously with the analytic style.

CONCLUSION

This paper has examined several assumptions about Black children and families inherent in social science research. "Pathological" interpretations of linguistic and cognitive behavior of Black children, influenced federal and local intervention programs to compensate for alleged "deficits." These educational strategies all aimed at changing Black people.

Another way of looking at Black children and their education is offered, one which recognizes and values diverse styles of behavior and, therefore, builds upon the existing cultural patterns of Black children to plan educational programs for them. This model seeks to humanize the institution.

Although the "wave" of intervention and compensatory programs is beyond us, the attitudes and assumptions about Black children and families which permeated these programs, unfortunately, still remain to influence current educational planning. An active search must continue for positive information, free of ethnocentric and racist bias, and for new strategies which contribute to the positive growth and development of Black children.

> "There is no such thing as a neutral educational process. Education either functions as an instrument which is used to facilitate the integration of the younger generation into the logic of the present system and bring about conformity to it, or it becomes the 'practice of freedom,' the means by which men and women deal critically and creatively with reality and discover how to participate in the transformation of their world."[74]

In light of this challenge, "we can see that an educator is either an oppressor or a liberator."[75]

APPENDIX: Illustration A and B taken from Rosalie Cohen, "Conceptual Styles, Culture Conflict, and Non-Verbal Tests of Intelligence." American Anthropologist, Vol. 71, No. 5. October 1969.

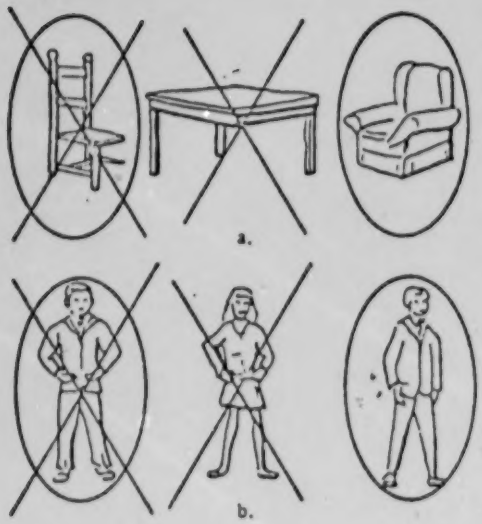

ILLUSTRATION A: Sigel Test of Conceptual Style

Pupil is instructed to choose two of three pictures on each plate that are alike or that go together in some way and to tell why he selected them. Test consists of 19 plates.

Typical responses:
(a) Analytic (X's) -- because a leg is missing from each or because they are wood. Characteristics of response: - stimulus centered; parts-specific.

Relational (O's) -- because they look good together, or because they are both chairs. Characteristics of response: self-centered; global characteristics have meaning.

(b) Analytic (X's) --both have arms on hips
Relational (O's) -- both are boys

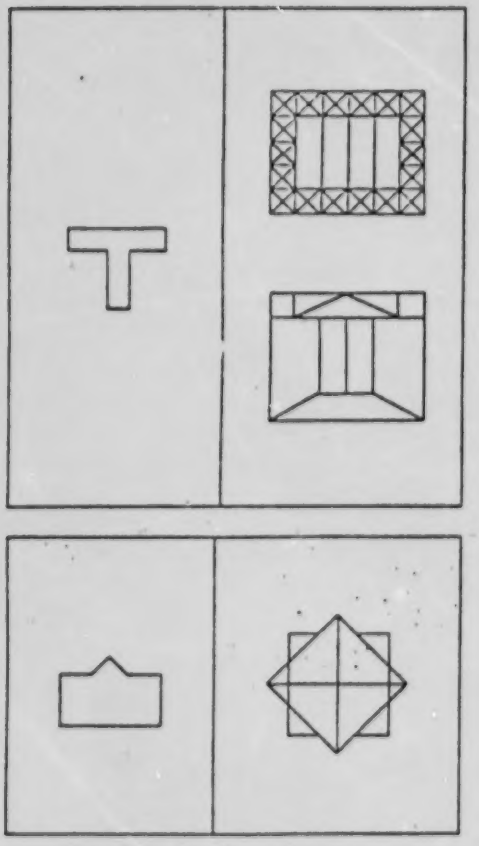

ILLUSTRATION B: Witkin Test of Graphic Field Articulation (Adaptation)

Pupil is instructed to find the simple figures in the complex ones. High relational pupils have difficulty finding any simple figures in the complex ones. High analytic pupils find from 15-19 out of a possible 22. Test consists of 7 plates.

FOOTNOTES

1. Baratz, J. & S., "Early Childhood Intervention: The Social Science Base of Institutional Racism," p. 30.

2. Ibid , p. 29

3. Ramirez, M., "Implications of Cultural Democracy and Cognitive Styles for Evaluative Research," p. 1

4. Baratz, J. & S., ". . .Institutional Racism," p. 31

5. Ibid , p. 31

6. Ramirez, M., p. 2

7. Moore, E., "The Politics Behind National Programming," Curriculum Approaches From a Black Perspective, pp. 29-38

8. Baratz, J., "Language and Cognitive Assessment of Negro Children: Assumptions and Needs," p. 1

9. Wilkerson, D., "Compensatory Education: Defining the Issues," Disadvantaged Child, Volume 3, p. 25

10. Baratz, J. & S., ". . .Institutional Racism," p. 32

11. Thomas, A., & Sillen, S., Racism and Psychiatry, p. 3

12. Baratz, J. & S., ". . .Institutional Racism," p. 32

13. Ibid.

14. Ibid, p. 30

15. " , p. 32

16. Nobles, W., "Africanity: It's Role in Black Families," Black Scholar, p. 11

17. Baratz, J. & S., ". . .Institutional Racism," p. 31

18. Cullinar, B., "Language Expansion for Black Children in the Primary Grades," p. 1

19. Johnson, K., "Teacher's Attitudes Toward the Nonstandard Negro Dialect - Let's Change It," pp. 177-181

20. Baratz, J., "Language and Cognitive Assessment . . ." p. 8

21. Ibid, p. 3

22. Ibid.

23. Ibid, p. 6

24. Baratz, J & S., ". . .Institutional Racism," p. 33

25. Johnson, J., "Teacher's Attitudes . . ," p. 177

26. Bernstein, B., "A Sociolinguistic Approach to Socialization: With Some References to Educatibility," Language and Poverty, pp. 25-58

27. Ibid.

28. Baratz, J., "Language and Cognitive Assessment. . ," p. 10

29. Bernstein, B., pp. 25-28

30. Baratz, J., p. 10

31. Ibid, p. 9

32. Ibid.

33. Ibid.

34. Ibid.

35. Baratz, J. & S., ". . .Institutional Racism," p. 33-34

36. Ibid, p. 34

37. Ibid, p. 36

38. Ibid, p. 35

39. Wilkerson, D., "Compensatory Education: Defining the Issues", p. 25

40. Faust, M & W., "Head Start - Evaluating the Program," p. 2

41. Ibid, p. 10

42. Frost, j & Rowland, G., Compensatory Programming: The Acid Test of American Education, p. 51

43. Ibid, p. 52-53

44. Ibid, p. 57

45. "

46. Ibid.

47. Ibid, p. 57-58

48. Ibid, p. 64-65

49. " , p. 68-69

50. Ramirez, M., Implications for Cultural Democracy. . ," p. 2

51. Englemann, S., "How to Construct Effective Language Programs for the Poverty Child," Language and Poverty, p. 120

52. Baratz, J & S., ". . .Institutional Racism," p. 29

53. Ibid.

54. Wilkerson, p. 25-26

55. Ibid, p. 25

56. Frost, J & Rowland, G., Compensatory Programming. . ," p. 87

57. Winschel, J., "In the Dark. . .Reflections on Compensatory Education 1960-1970," Disadvantaged Child, Volume 3, p. 7

58. Baratz, J & S., p. 34

59. Johnson, K., p. 183

60. Baratz, J & S., p. 47

61. Johnson, K., pp. 176-184

62. Cohen, R., "Conceptual Styles, Culture Conflict, and Nonverbal Tests of Intelligence," pp. 500-524

63. Ibid, p. 500

64. Ibid, p. 501

65. Cohen, R., "The Influence of Conceptual Rule-Sets on Measures of Learning Ability," p. 48

66. Ibid, p. 43

67. Ibid.

68. "

69. Ramirez, M., "Implications for Cultural Democracy. . ," p. 2

70. Ibid, p. 1

71. Ibid, p. 3

72. Ibid, p. 3-4

73. Ibid, p. 6

74. Shaull, R., Foreword, Pedagogy of the Oppressed, Freire, Paulo.

75. Karina, J., "The Politics of Education in the Classroom," Curriculum Approaches From a Black Perspective, p. 18 (Cited from Lerone Bennet's Challenge of Blackness)

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THE BLACK CHILD AND PIAGET

INTRODUCTION

There has, in recent years, developed a considerable interest in the theory of intellectual development as researched by Jean Piaget, and especially as it relates to the Black child.

Who is Piaget and what is this theory about? It would take volumes to detail the man and his theory; therefore this article will deal briefly with it and address itself more to the implications of the theory in a school setting for Black children.

PIAGET'S THEORY

Jean Piaget, a Swiss psychologist, has studied children's thinking for years. His study led to a new, more enlightened perspective on how children learn and think, their perception of the world.

Knowledge, according to Piaget, is not just a copy of reality but the actual ability to discover or invent it for oneself. Knowledge, then, does not usually come from a vicarious experience but comes from active involvement and is derived from what the child creates within that involvement.

Since his concern is centered around how the mind works rather than what it does, Piaget directed his energies toward understanding rather than prediction. He conceives learning as a continual process, one of organizing and re-organizing of structures. Through this process of organizing and re-organizing, the child learns the boundaries of his world. He builds continually on the old while combining it with the new.

As in all things in the universe, there is an order and the findings of Piaget show a developmental order which is reflected in people all over the globe. The order, in this case, is called developmental stages. The stages begin with the sensori-motor (the stage of pre-language and pre-symbolic activities) and ends in a formal operational stage. In this stage, the child has reached a point where he can internalize thought, abstract and hypothesize,

deal with things outside of concrete form and study variables systematically for problem solving. Since the theory is based on epistomology, little attention is paid to I.Q. Piaget, when asked about I.Q. tend to lean toward a concept of many kinds of intelligence and points out that schools usually measure only one.

A PIAGETIAN SCHOOL

Schools based on the developmental theory would not appear as our traditional schools do since they reflect another theoretical hypothesis. Teachers in the Piagetian School are given a great deal of freedom: they can teach as individuals. Children would feel that they are learning as individuals.

Classrooms are busy and children are involving themselves in all kinds of activities. They are allowed to choose whatever they want to do. Many and varied kinds of materials would await them.

In this setting children are free to move and talk with one another. The teacher circulates, listens, asks questions and helps with spelling or reading.

The children are allowed to "make a mess" because each child is responsible for cleaning up behind himself. Although there is a great deal of busy noise the children are not allowed to annoy one another.

Children learn quickly here because they want to learn. Activities are of their own choice and little effort is made to force them to sit still at a desk and listen. Discipline problems as we know them would hardly exist.

ROLE OF THE TEACHER

The role of the teacher in a Piagetian school setting is not an easy one. A teacher is not all knowing (in this setting) and does not impart knowledge to children while they sit patiently and listen. Rather he/she provides the kind of setting in which children are helped to construct their own knowledge. The teacher then facilitates rather than teaches.

The teacher role is not to seek a right answer but rather to help children reason more effectively, to think. In facilitating learning there is a constant diagnosing a child's emotional state, cognitive level and interests.

It is not easy to maintain a balance between authority and freedom, but a Piagetian teacher must do this, encouraging children to develop their own standards of behavior.

In order to maintain this kind of setting teachers must be concerned, conscientious and resourceful. They must constantly evaluate in an effort to find more materials, allow for the child's maximum functioning. There is no one to determine the direction they should go: therefore direction and interests must come from inside the teacher.

There is always an emphasis on the child's own thinking and judgement rather than correct language and adult logic.

For a teacher to function in the Piagetian setting it appears they, he/she must be creative, better trained with a thorough knowledge of children's emotional and intellectual development as well as secure with himself.

CHARACTERISTICS OF BLACK PEOPLE

The relationship of Piaget's theory of intellectual development and the schools as it relates to Black children is exciting because it places Black children in an arena which emphasizes cognitive development rather than school tested intelligence.

In order that we might see the implications of Piaget's theory on the development of classroom strategies for Black children, we will explore, by way of example, one particular set of characteristics of Black people. (Hilliard, Weems) The selection of this particular description, while not intended to suggest an unequivocal statement regarding Black behavior represents in my opinion, a grasp of the general quality of behavioral characteristics which have been identified by other Black sociologists, psychologists and educators. In addition, my own experience in Black family and community life, as well as in the classroom with Black children, serves to corroborate the general nature of these characteristics. It remains a challenge, however, to the reader and to all those involved in the education of young Black children to test for themselves these kinds of hypotheses.

To continue, however, it is hypothesized that most Black people:

1. prefer wholes rather than pieces and bits; become impatient with unnecessary pieces.

2. prefer inferred reasoning (if this is so, then such is so); tends toward intuitive conceptualization.

3. focus on people rather than things; prefer an interaction with people.

4. approximate, generally are not specific.

5. possess a sense of justice;are quick to predict injustice.

6. are altruistic; share, recognize their community and have concern for their fellow man.

7. prefer an opportunity to display different styles as a status standard.

8. prefer novelty instead of what has been done in the past (affective creativity has come out of unfeathered experiences).

9. are not language dependent; language changes from month to month, day to day.

Taking these characteristics in order, we will relate them to some of the ideas expressed by Piaget as a result of his research findings.

Wholistic Approach

It is not difficult to relate to the fact that Black people tend to prefer wholes instead of bits and pieces. Piaget says that a child deals with wholes first. Although he can relate to bits and pieces, he prefers wholes. The schools tend to go from piece specific to wholes in direct contradiction to the research findings. Since the dominant society bases the curriculum on what that group prefers, Black children are forced to try to adapt. Their way of looking at the world is questioned.

That world also reflects a tendency to inferred reasoning and a great use of the intuitive sense. Since Piaget quite emphatically says that learning must be an active process, because knowledge comes from within, children (but especially the Black child) must be allowed to do their own learning. Talking does not help his understanding as much as involvement. He needs situations he can experience, trying things out to see what happens, manipulating symbols, asking questions and trying to find his own answers, dealing with what he finds

at one time and comparing these with later findings and the findings of his peers. In this kind of setting he can use his intuitive senses without penalty and is allowed to check them out. He will begin to know how accurate intuition is. Generally, the idea of using intuition is frowned upon (even by Piaget) since Western culture tends not to value feelings as a tool for learning.

Social Involvement

Social interaction, a vital part of what Piaget sees as necessary for learning is complimentary with the fact that Black people tend to focus on people rather than things. Blacks are socially oriented and regard a people-to-people relationship as an essential part of their culture.

Encouraging Black children's social interaction in the school setting is allowing him to use what he does well in a learning situation. While we recognize that things are not an important part of this socialization and that materials are essential in the school setting, the environment begins to work better for the Black child if there is also an involvement with people.

While there are those who believe that open education does not work for Black children, in citing some of the needs of children, Piaget described a need as the kind of freedom which a good open setting allows. Since it is natural for Black children to seek out people, move about, socialize, we believe that the open setting provides for this and at the same time allows the child to develop a kind of responsibility for himself and his actions that is important.

Freedom within a classroom setting would also give the child who tends to approximate the time and space to develop his own kind of reasoning. Black children would find out for themselves that here is a time when specificity is of prime importance and that although they tend to be non-specific most of the time could determine more easily when to be specific.

A Sense of Justice

Black people tend to have a sense of justice. In relating this to Piaget, it could certainly begin to take place if the progress of an individual child is based almost entirely on his developmental level.

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This would not put him in competition with his peers and is important when we consider that school progress (or lack of it) is generally based on intelligence tests.

Intelligence tests have no measure for the fact that Black children tend to be altruistic (shares, recognizes his community and shows a concern for his fellow man). Piagetian classrooms offer an opportunity for children to use their need to share. Black children in a pre-school setting tend to share at a time developmentally when they are said not to be able to do this. Certainly this comes from a cultural environment which emphasizes sharing.

What of the preference of Black people for novelty? The Piagetian setting would be one of novelty, ever changing. He states that children do not survive in passivity or static. This kind of thinking is significant for Black children because of their need for change. The capacity for easy, rapid adaptation to novel stimuli is one of the remarkable strengths of Black children. This spontaneity becomes counter adaptive in a setting which emphasizes rigidity of thought and behavior.

The Use of Language

The language of Black children reflect involvement with their environment. It moves depending on need, condition and feeling. This is reflected in the changes in the meaning of a word from year to year, month to month and even week to week. It is informal as opposed to the formal language of the dominant culture.

Formal language has a definite meaning for each word. Black language tends to change in meaning and is an attempt of Black people to add color to a language which is otherwise formal and static.

If Black children bring a special kind of language to the school environment, it is important that the teacher recognize that difference. This is not to say that she should discourage the use of that language but should, instead encourage it as well as provide experiences which allow children to hear another way of using the language. Through these actual experiences the child might more easily bridge the gap between his language and school language.

Generally children (and especially Black children) are promptly corrected when they use the "wrong language." This tends to make children close mouthed. If the child is encouraged to use his own language, he will begin to feel the importance of what he says and thinks and will gain confidence in expressing his way of experiencing things.

Goals for Cognitive Growth

Piaget questions the goals of American schools and has attempted to set forth some goals which might be appropriate according to the

developmental process defined by his research.

What has this to do with the Black child? First, consider that a child brings something into a school environment (language, collaboration, confrontation and exchange, his self concept) from his home environment. Therefore it is agreed that the Black child comes from an environment of his own, different from some Black environments and most white environments. If the school has a set of educational principals based on the environment of the white middle class, what happens to that Black child who comes with a different modual? He is expected to conform.

But Piaget maintains that each person, in the process of his development, must go through each of the developmental stages as defined by his research in his own time and on his own terms. He maintains that development of knowledge is a spontaneous process which involves the nervous system and the development of mental functions as well as the body. He maintains that learning is generally provoked by outside situations. It is a limited process, limited to a single problem or to a single structure; therefore (1) learning has to be an active process; (2) social collaboration among the children is of prime importance; (3) children must act on concrete objects; (4) children need interaction in order to learn to think; (5) learning should not be the rote acquisition of isolated facts; (6) self concept is based on what a child brings to his environment and what he does with it.

The structure and concept of the Piagetian schools fit the characteristics of most Black children. If our schools are going to successfully meet the needs of children and especially Black children, Piaget would agree that they must address themselves to cultural patterns within this pluralistic society instead of ignoring them in favor of a curriculum for all based on one.

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PARENTS AND TEACHERS: THE CULTURE TRANSMITTERS

INTRODUCTION

We are experiencing a period in our history in which America's citizens are demanding a voice in the program planning and administration of the public school system, generated out of dissatisfaction, distrust, and confusion. The parents of children attending these schools are not pleased with much of what is happening: some have learned that their children are unable to function effectively in society; others feel that their children lack technical skills required to secure jobs and the social skills necessary for personal fulfillment in a culturally pluralistic world. They feel that the school has remained monocultural and that their children are unfairly assessed: only one type of behavior is tolerated and only one style of learning is acceptable. The school seems to be working under the assumption that racism does not exist in our society and that there is no conflict. Failures then, on the part of the child, are said to emanate from cultural deficits rather than from inadequate teaching. Parents are blaming the schools and schools are blaming the parents.

Teachers are threatened by poor working conditions and inadequate salaries. They feel that they are expected to motivate children whose parents don't care about them or who are inadequate themselves. Teachers often feel that minority parents and low-income parents are dumping their children on the schools and then blaming the schools for failing in a job which teachers feel is not their responsibility - at least not theirs alone. Most teachers, who have studied in monocultural colleges and universities, have been trained to teach "middle-class majority type" children. The expectation is that the child will sit quietly, be eager and well-motivated, and learn. These teachers, minority and majority, therefore, cannot be expected to understand culture differences as anything other than deficits.

In the last ten years, minority parents have begun to demand that they be included in the schools - visually, philosophically, and historically, and that their cultures and values be recognized and accepted as a valid part of this country's heritage. Schools are responding at a snail's pace, transfering bodies far more readily than ideas. Integration plans and multi-cultural plans have created further frustration and confusion, and although representative of progress in general, tend not to focus on or effectively deal with

the racism that continues to produce school failures.

Parents are demanding action at this level, in their attempts to guarantee that their children receive an effective and relevant education. They are seeking a redefinition of the values and expectations of school personnel for their children. For example, a Black or Chicano child who finishes high school and succeeds in obtaining a job that allows him to remain off of the welfare rolls may appear successful to the average educator in this country, the assumption being that this is as far as "they" are able to go, or that their dissatisfactions over not having obtained professionalism is the result of their unrealistically high expectations. The minority parent would have a different assessment of this situation and may ask why his or her child was not encouraged to attain more, because they know that their children are pushed into vocational training, if not pushed out of school altogether. Some parents are organizing so that they may correct these injustices and restructure the system. Parents are demanding not only curriculum materials that are reflective of a pluralistic society, but teachers that are open and understanding of differences in children, their cultures and their learning styles. In the process, states are mandating more parent involvement in schools* and encouraging open communication between parent and teacher, for if children are to benefit, then they together must share the responsibilities for culture transmission.

THE SETTING

Schools are social institutions that have been given the responsibility for educating the public's children. Historically, they were established to assure that the melting pot notion would work. This notion of a melting pot or tossed salad, meant that all of the "weird" immigrants should be taught to reject their culture in favor of the "superior" Anglo-Saxon, Protestant culture, and implied that other languages, values and behaviors were not accepted. During this early period in the history of education, ethnic studies (Anglo Saxon Studies) was taught at Harvard and all the colleges that tried to imitate Harvard. Once the Anglo-Saxon, Protestant norms were internalized by the majority of our society, it was not longer necessary to offer these courses. (Cross, 1976). Help towards the assimilation goal also came from the Department of Immigration as quotas were set for certain groups of

*It is interesting to note that the mandates have been aimed at minority parents. The implication here is that the parents will be made responsible for supplying the necessary information. Therefore, by omission, children in homogenous settings are not exposed to cultural values others than their own. Neither are the institutions.

peoples that were felt to be "more different or difficult to acculturate". Meanwhile, the schools were gradually becoming quite successful in educating and acculturating children, while ignoring the fact that these children who did not belong to the majority culture were being taught, through shame and hate, to accept their lowered status and all the accoutrements attended thereto. Minority children were taught to succeed at all the menial jobs, live in squalled conditions, be hungry and degraded, thus reassuring the majority culture that their superiority was maintained. Over time, the schools succeeded in undertraining enough people so that vast welfare, penal and unemployment systems could be created to provide jobs for millions of "other" people; in causing enough personality disturbances to keep psychiatrists and social workers well fed; and in forbiding teachers from trying to understand why their skills were ineffective for many, leading them to be satisfied with believing that it was not the fault of the schools, rather, it was the fault of the deficit cultures. Patrick D. Lynch described this form of education as emanating from:

> ". . .a colonalization hypothesis (which) is that teachers of a society treating a minority as a non-participating force in that society will view school mainly as a socializing and acculturating experience rather than a cognitive experience for the child of that minority. . .Thus, learning rules, picking up 'motivation', and internalizing obedience to the system are good preparation for the kinds of jobs minority members are prepared to hold." (de la Garza, et. al., 1973, p. 188)

These philosophical foundations of our public educational system create problems for our society, since "melting pot has meant surrender of one's past and culture to something schools euphemistically called American society and culture." (Chicano Manifesto, 1972.) School methodology has developed based on the same assumptions. The education of children is carried out in the immediate company of a large batch of others, thus making it necessary that children be treated alike and required to do the same things at the same time. To continue such an educational format when teachers recognize that all children learn at their own pace and some teachers know that children of different cultures have different learning styles only denies reality. In addition, all parts of the day's activities are scheduled with one activity leading to another, the whole of which is imposed from above, through a system of explicit formal rulings and role requirements. It is often impossible to determine where the ultimate source of power rests, but it is easy to see that parents and teachers are the recipients of the blame. The content of the various activities are brought together as a part of a single, rational plan purportedly designed to fulfill the official aims of the

institution. Those who work in the institutions must induce the other participants, administrators, teachers, and students, to work via the reward or punishment plan. These characteristics of schools make it evident that such institutions have vast problems and are greatly incompatible with a pluralistic society's family institutions.

The Responsibility for Culture Transmission

In American society the school shares the responsibility of culture transmission with the family. However, "the culture" which the school accepts as worthy of transmission is based on the melting pot assumptions mentioned earlier, as well as on an ethnocentric, or Anglocentric position which places groups of people in superior and inferior positions in relation to each other. The stage is thus set for a confrontation between family and school, when stress is created by conflicting cultural values. Because the results of this stress is suffered most by children, education is a most dramatic example of the devastating impact that the reigning culture superiority paradigm has had on all children in this country.

Illustrative of this conflict is the issue of language, the first and most significant cultural pattern.

> "The vocabulary of a language reflects the basic categories into which prior generations have fitted and interpreted and coded their experiences, dreams and wisdom. By means of language, the dead are enabled to contribute to the education of the living, for learning one's native tongue equips the individual to decode his cultural heritage . . .Man draws the content of his four basic dimensions: learning to define reality, to have goals, to have beliefs about causation, and to have norms, from his language." (Thompson and Van Houten, 1970, pp. 22-23.)

One can only be saddened when we remember how the schools have forbidden the use of any language that was not Standard English. Such methods certainly instill shame in people and can also be the cause of a great deal of misunderstanding. Given the pride derived from the melting pot theory and the results we have obtained, one should suspect that such a process of education has been destructive to vast numbers of people.

Before we examine the stress placed upon families and teachers, we need to acknowledge the fact that at the point of entrance into public schools, everyone experiences some "culture shock". The child is shocked because the school has replaced his home, the teacher, his parents and a new set of rules and regulations must be quickly learned.

Even the "average Anglo child", whose culture is being carried forward and built upon, experiences "culture shock", if only from the exposure to peoples whose appearance, language, style of dress and behavior are different from his. The parent experiences shock either from differences in peoples, stringency of rules (some of which they themselves experienced as a powerless child and now must experience as a powerless parent) and/or from the recognition that what he or she has culturally transmitted to his child is not acceptable. The cultural shock experienced by the teacher emanates from his or her own lack of exposure to differences in people and from the inadequate training which he or she has received in the monocultural, educational institutions where time was painfully and expensively spent. Having been educated to teach the mythological average American child, the teacher has not been prepared for the average child that he encounters in the public's schools. (Hilliard, 1975.)

The response which children, parents and teachers have to the cultural shock and what they do as a result, is largely determined by personality, role, position and culture. Each individual comes with a certain set of stresses that are personally, culturally and socially determined. Delineation of some of the general stresses and stress periods experienced by most parents and teachers will enable us to develop a base from which to begin resolution of some of the problems.

PARENT STRESSES

Every parent, regardless of culture, ethnic identity or color, experiences the stress brought on by the separation that occurs when the child enters school. Separation - anxiety, often attributed to the child, is experienced by the parent as well. Parents' question: Did I do a good job; will he be safe, liked, well-behaved, cooperative, a good student, or preferably the teacher's favorite? The more different the parent and the child are from the norm, the more stressful will be the separation. Initially they wish that the school will love him, give him the attention he needs and find him as precious and unique as he is to his family. It has yet to be determined that color of skin, ethnicity, income, values and beliefs, religion, or history detract from this level of concern on the part of parents. Behaviors may so differ as to enable one to assume that a parent is not concerned, but behavior often reflects the opposite of what we think we see and understand in others. Most parents are able to accept the separation out of self-trust, trust in society or a sense of defeat and powerlessness.

Once the child is settled in school, both parent and child begin to deal with a second kind of stress, the period when more culture transmission goes on between the teacher and the child, rather than the parent and the child. Most mothers can recall the day that they were told that the teacher knew more than she did. This takes some getting

accustomed to and is usually handled in situations that have minimal value. However, what happens to the parent's stress tolerance level when the child believes the teacher who teaches (most unconsciously and indirectly) that one group of people is better than another group of people, or one type of hair is best, one language is best and so on? These are very deep personal and social issues that relate to variations in values and beliefs and are reflective of others' cultures - the "stuff" of why I think that MY values are the ones I wish my child to have rather than those of some "other people I know". The degree of stress imposed by such incidences may cause a parent feelings of frustration, self-doubt and fear and certainly produces anger at a society that does not value her children but expects her children to behave as if they were a part of the society. People with no share in a society's benefits are finding it more and more difficult to contribute to that society. It is the individual strength of each parent which determines the potential for resolution and or submission.

Most parents have little, if any "training" for the job of parenting, one of the most vitally important tasks of a society. Parents who feel good about themselves and the values which they hold are able to confront the teacher, or the other parent, who is passing out such inaccuracies, state their rights and point out options for the person. They can assure their children that their values are valued and validate them through their own behavior. On the other hand, the parent who is insecure about himself, his position or his ethnicity will not have the strength to withstand such an onslaught. There are several options here. The parent may call the teacher stupid and tell the child to ignore him or her, not realizing that this is extremely difficult for most children and impossible for others. The mother who says this and provides the child with other evidence to support her, extended family members and friends who discredit these stereotypes, is going to get better results. The mother who says this and at the same time is heard to utter the same epithets or implies the same through her own behavior, is giving double messages. Many parents come to believe that they are inferior and transmit such feelings to their children.

A third source of stress comes in the form of intimidation by the school as the institution that knows best how to educate children. Parents, especially those in socially and economically suppressed groups, have been socialized to believe that education is the key to success. As a result, there is a kind of "blind faith" that causes them to become hesitant to challenge teachers. In addition these parents fail to question the school because it is such a vast and powerful institution. Parents have held back, month after month, from questioning a teacher's performance out of feelings of inadequacy or inability to judge a "good" teacher, or out of fear of reprisals for the child. I have heard many parents describe this process: step by step they rationalize, finally

coming to the conclusion that they were justified in their suspicions but then "it's too late in the year to switch the child to another teacher".

One might view the "career-planning" phase of Junior and Senior High as stressful for parents in this way. Our technological advancement and speed has rendered most parents obsolete, feeling that they are out of step and not in a position to help the child make career decisions. They do not know "new math", they do not know what subjects are required if one is to become an engineer, doctor, lawyer or architect. Most parents do not learn of the tracking systems and assessment systems that relegate many minority children into semi-skilled jobs until its too late. The parent trusted the system and in doing so, abdicated his authority to the system. If the child was directed into vocational training, the parent assumed that the school knew best or was too fearful to contradict such an educated decision.

The average child continues to suffer from an elitist tracking system and racist assessment techniques and methods while their parents are blamed for not instilling them with manners, respect for authority, a work ethic and patriotism. However, parents are beginning to demand justice for themselves and their children. One San Francisco mother is in the process of suing the Board of Education in San Francisco for permitting her son to graduate from high school without knowing how to read! Other parents are forming parent and student groups so as to gain the power they feel they need in order to force the schools to restructure the tracking and assessment programs.

A final source of stress comes when dissonance occurs between family and school expectations and aspirations. This dissonance is the result of the school's implicit and explicit assumptions about peoples, their race, economic status, or social class. An example is the counselor who places the low income Black male in all shop classes, while the white female students are placed in college prep classes. When faced with this type of stress, the parent is confronted with fear, as opposed to vague anxieties. The facts are beginning to come in and they indicate that the child may not have the opportunities that the parent had intended. Can he graduate and support himself, maintaining enough self-confidence and determination to survive? When confronted with societal rejections in jobs, housing, salaries, will he be able to maintain a positive self-concept and acceptance of his value as a human being, or will he have to steal to maintain peer images or take drugs so as not to experience the pain that comes from being rejected because of "what" you are rather than "who" you are?

This particular conflict with education is especially difficult for many parents and often results in physical and verbal confrontations between parents and teachers. It is a time when the parent experiences

a threat of defeat or may have to accept far less for his child. The minority or poor parent who needs most for his child to "do better than he did" becomes threatened and afraid. If the child does not attain the expected goal, many of the parents become unable to cope with the disappointment and anger; anger at the child for failing and at society for failing his child and himself. In other instances, the parent rallies for a new fight, having learned from the past. They place themselves in the schools and are often overly cautious, distrusting and suspicious. They learn to succeed in prohibiting the schools from dealing from a stacked deck and the chances for each successive child are somewhat enhanced.

These parents are becoming some of the most vocal parents in schools today. The teachers and administrators come to know them and often they "hate to see them coming". However, the teachers and other school personnel who are responsive to these parents learn that they are none other than parents who are deeply concerned and caring for their children.

Complexity of Stress on Minority Parents

It is necessary to mention the added stress that is suffered by the minority parent: Racism. First, the minority parent has had to send his child into a social institution that does not value him as a person, either because of his color, languages, or other "differences". It is the minority parent who must teach the child to be human and a minority in a white society, to accept himself and distinguish himself from whites, and to learn to deal with whites. While white parents may choose to teach their children to relate to minorities, minority parents have no such choice. The minority parent is faced with the task of raising his child to "make it" in two worlds, thus to be somewhat schizophrenic. How one teaches a child to value himself and succeed in a hostile environment that does not value him raises questions which deserve serious study. Many minority parents are performing this task quite successfully. Most are not.

The Spanish mother who must encourage her child to drop his language so as not to be punished or ridiculed in school is asking that child to give up his first, and most significant cultural pattern, the key to his culture and the source of acquisition of its content. The "culture shock" to minorities of school and varied other social institutions requires that a constant switching of environmental and cultural definitions must be dealt with -- thus the sense of living in two worlds that is often felt by minorities. The contradictions of our society are reflected in what minority parents feel about education, those who are educators and the society in which the education is to be of benefit. One cannot generalize about minority parents except to note that they have the common experience of racism and all its

insanities to contend with throughout their years as parents.

TEACHER STRESSES

The teacher experiences many identifiable stresses. The stresses relate to or evolve out of the following areas: affectiveness and competence; ability to withstand other professionals' expertise and experience; ability to look and act like a teacher in front of adults - especially parents; liking to be liked; children's attitudes towards the teacher; over-reacting to a child's needs; over-identifying with a child; insecure self-identity and value concepts; ability to maintain a judicious balance between control and freedom; preoccupation with a child's problem (with blaming self, parent, or child) instead of resolving; unrealistically oriented and therby fettered and used; high expectations of self-reinforced by peers, principal and or parents; amount of training in group dynamics and parent-child relationship dynamics; and perhaps most importantly, his or her own emotional states and reactions to given situations. Some of these stresses are shared by all individuals who are in a role of authority but they are particularly applicable to the teacher and no doubt there are more. (Menninger, 1976)

There are additional stresses which may occur when one has to relate to parents and children who are different and presumed "deficient". We are slowly becoming cognizant of the fact that differences are not deficits. However, at this point in the teacher's experience, the stresses become more forceful because she is having to deal with a cultural system or language that is unfamiliar, or one that has already been dismissed as inferior to her own culture and values. Roy Menninger refers to these stresses as ones to which the teacher tends to overreact with intellectualization and stereotyping. The question: "Is the child disturbed, or just disturbing?" gets lost in the process and goes unanswered. (Menninger, 1976) In this situation the teacher also experiences powerful swings in his or her own emotions which may leave him feeling defensive, guilty and self-concerned. A survey of attitudes of potential teachers indicated shock on the part of the teachers when they learned that they were expected to teach all of the children of the public. (Picott, 1976, p. 59)

In addition to those stresses that are a part of position, role and culture of the teacher, are the pressures that are felt when faced with authority diffusion, suppression as a management tool, accusations from the community, poor salaries and the lack of support from and sharing with peers. The individual teacher's response to these stresses is, like the parent, dependent upon individuality and culture. However, teachers have been trained to teach. They have not

been trained to teach culturally diverse children.

Complexity of Stress on Minority Teachers

Specific stresses of the minority teacher should be mentioned. The old and still accurate addage about Blacks being the last hired, first fired, is still valid. Even when schools began to accept the notions of Black Studies components, they often assigned whites to these positions. Integration of students made Anglos anxious about the qualifications of minority teachers (some sense, no doubt, of the unequal education they had received) for Anglo students. Integration has brought about massive displacement of minority teachers and administrators, in the North as well as in the South. "In 1954 the Black principal in the South was like the Buffalo in the West in 1754: He was found everywhere; in 1973 the Black high school principal in the South was like the Buffalo in the West in 1973, few and far between" (Picott, 1976, p. 52). In 1954 New York State had approximately 440 Black principals, 75 of whom were secondary principals. Three years ago, 1973, New York had 31 Black elementary principals and one Black secondary school principal. Integration has been used in many communities as a way of removing Black educators, particularly Black male educators from any real position of power and authority. (Picott, 1976, p. 52)

In 1972 there was one teacher for every 22 American children; one Asian for every 31 Asian children; one Black teacher for every 36 Black children; one Indian teacher for every 86 Indian students, and one Spanish teacher for every 107 Spanish speaking children. The Black student population in New York grew from 542,000 in 1970 to 956,000 in 1972. During the same period the number of Black teachers grew from 7,054 to 7,461. Discrimination in recruiting and hiring has cost minority teachers approximately 211,000 jobs in the past five years. Black teachers are not fired, necessarily but when they leave or retire, they are not replaced. (Picott, pp. 52 & 53)

The stresses that are added to the Black teacher include racism and all its ramifications. The pressure of having to prove their expertise - the teaching job market being extremely tight at the present -- and having to be concerned as to whether or not they are being evaluated as a good teacher or as a Black teacher; having to determine whether or not they are unable to relate to the Anglo or Black parents because of personality differences, or because the Anglo parent dislikes the color of their skin, or the Black parent thinks they are inadequate and certain to "have it in for" the Black children so that they can keep their jobs.

A WORKING RELATIONSHIP

Understanding the stresses under which both parents and teachers

are struggling can lead to possible beginnings in the development of relationships. The teacher should initiate the relationship because it is good for the child, the parent, the school and the teacher. Parents are reluctant to do so out of fear of saying or doing the wrong thing or because they have heard that teachers do not want parents in the schools. This has not been an unsubstantiated rumor. A teachers' organization president told me that "basically, teachers want parents to keep hands off". However, the teacher may find it to her advantage to communicate with parents and I would suggest precisely that, for the following reasons: because parents know a great deal about their children and present a valuable resource to you; because parents are individuals and thereby command your respect; because you are responsible for all of the children; if not you, then who?

It may be especially difficult for you to relate to the parent who is different. It is especially difficult for the minority parent to relate to teachers or trust them as they have been exploited, have minimal resources and have been culturally and historically denied recognition in our country. One might even wonder why they entrust their children to the public schools. Some do so because they feel so powerless and without alternatives. Others do so with the intent of making it respond to and educate their child and most do so because of a deep and simplistic hope that their child will "make it" in this world.

Initially, the teacher should relate to all parents and peers in a manner that serves as a good role model for children, reflecting respect and acceptance of each individual and demonstrating social skills that are effective in social relationships, regardless of real or imagined differences. Parents know that every child is different. Teachers know that every child is different. Parents know that every teacher is different. Teachers know that every parent is different.

The first and cardinal rule for developing a working relationship is to relate to the individual. Active listening is required and serves as a tool by which one may begin to know the other as he is, not as he appears to be nor as he has been defined by society - or another teacher. Pay attention to the person in front of you and do not interpret what he is saying. Interpretation tends to place the other's thoughts and ideas into your frame of reference, or value system. If you cannot understand what the person is saying, because of a cultural bias or language, then ask them to explain further or find someone who will interpret for you. Teachers should not have a conference with a parent whose language the teacher does not understand. If you find this to be the case, set up another time and find someone who speaks the parent's

language or ask the parent to bring a friend who speaks the teacher's language. This may sound obvious, but it is not to many who assume that everyone knows THE language.

It is often suggested that the teacher has too much to do in the classroom and cannot find the time to get to know parents. Both the parent and the teacher must make every effort to take the time to meet each other. It is suggested that a teacher could use two evenings a week, beginning the second week of school, and see two parents per evening - four parents per week. That takes care of sixteen parents in a month. In addition, one parent per one recess per day, over a four week period gives you twenty more parent contacts for a total of thirty-six in a month. If this is too much, then do it in two months. Teachers are assessing every child in the classroom during the first months of school and they will find that contact with the child's parents is of great benefit to the assessment process. After initial meetings with each child's parents, monthly meetings will serve to keep teachers and parents in touch with each other and the children's development. They also enable parents to know each other and provide an opportunity for sharing. Parents may even decide to give the teacher extra money for needed equipment, snacks or field trips by contributing or having a fund raiser for the class. Parents might also offer to lend themselves and time to help with such tasks as are required and time consuming such as cutting paper, collecting scraps, shopping for the class. The possibilities are limitless.

If the teacher is unable to make home visits for reasons other than "time" or uses time as an excuse, he may need to look at what is preventing him from doing so. If one is "afraid of the parents' neighborhood", take a friend, or find a policeman to offer his support while you are doing so. Policemen are quite nice people and would rather accompany a teacher to a certain neighborhood than be called for a disturbance in that neighborhood. If one fears the parent, his home environment or his attitude, one is prohibited from relating to that parent's child. It is suggested that the teacher who cannot come to grips with such situations should transfer that child out of her room, or in the case of many children, the teacher should resign and find some other source of income. Children are not educated by people who fear or hate them. They are intimidated and made to feel inadequate by such people and our society cannot afford to continue to allow the schools to produce such children. Our prisons are over-flowing and many have had to add "temporary classroom" type structures to their facilities. It is somewhat ironic to see prisoners been housed in portable classroom type facilities.

If parents and teachers take the time to know and be known by each other, the benefits can result in great reductions in discipline

problems, the talking in class, lack of cooperation or control and failing to follow through on homework. The precious time that the teacher took to make herself known to parents and to come to know her parents will be returned in the classroom. The parent you touch with your sincerity and your caring will touch their children and a collaborative educational process will have begun for all. The potential of such a collaboration between teacher, parent and child is vast and the benefits to the individuals involved and to society as a whole may serve to assure our survival in a culturally pluralistic world.

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Edward M. Greene

PREPARING OUR CHILDREN AND YOUTH FOR A FUTURE IN PLURAL AMERICA*

INTRODUCTION

As a society we are preparing our children and youth for the future. It is an observable fact that in America, they are going to be challenged by a diverse group of people and problems. Much of what they will choose to believe and practice is dependent upon the living, problem solving models presented by the adult would surrounding them today.

Today I would like to look at four areas requiring societal preparation and their respective impacts on children: 1) Double messages, 2) Intolerence of Differences, 3) Ethnocentrism, 4) Victim Blaming. I will then summarize a fifth type of preparation which can facilitate responsible adulthood and meaningful advocates for children and youth in a pluralistic society.

The focus is on providing a framework for the exploration of an approach to the development of a perspective which will:

1) allow you to look at your personal attitudinal awareness and responsibilities as a member of a pluralistic society

2) enhance and develop a mindset or perspective which will assist in building support systems and resources for children and those who are to serve them.

PREPARING OUR CHILDREN FOR DOUBLE MESSAGES

There exists in our society a system of verbal and non-verbal communication which has the capacity to indicate what is valued and worthwhile and what is not. These verbal and non-verbal messages can easily be conflicting. Adults communicate to children, for example, the value of telling the truth. If, at the same time adults lie to

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children, the conflict of double messages results. For example:

> If Johnny is told that babies are brought to their homes by storks and then later discovers that it ain't necessarily so, he may make some assumptions about why that adult told an untruth. One of those assumptions being: it is o.k. not to tell the truth sometimes, even though I am expected to tell the truth.

Another illustration of conflicting verbal/non-verbal communication might be:

> Asking your child to tell the person to whom you do not wish to speak that you are not home -- and you are. We must think about what this tells children. It is giving them permission to be deceptive. And involving that child in your dirty work, so to speak, is abdicating responsibility to own your feelings -- you should be able to tell any caller that you do not want to be bothered with them.

OR

> A teacher who ignores or laughs away swearing or derogatory language as cute or developmental is essentially giving permission, or indicating by default, that it's alright.

OR

> School environments exist which ignore, condemn or negatively reinforce active behavior. This essentially says that quiet, passive children are more highly valued. Yet educators give lip service to the fact that children have different styles of learning. And what does it mean that in some cultures of our society passive behavior is acceptable in girls, and more active behavior in boys? Are we sure we want to perpetuate these stereotyped options? Are we really valuing individual styles of learning or behaving?

Such are the situations involving double messages which we must work to resolve as well as be aware of in our daily interpersonal relationships.

An Expansion of Double Messages in a Societal Context

The impact on children living in a pluralistic society, can be varied. Added to the personal source of double messages are the overt and covert influences of the media, of society's institutions, of

business and of those in leadership roles. For example:

> what message can emerge from a school with an ethnically diverse student population but a homogeneous faculty and administration? What are we saying about the fact that responsible positions are given to the homogeneous group?

It can be a devastating experience . . .even more so in those settings where community people are used as aides because they are ethnically as heterogeneous as the student body. Then consider:

> Our libraries and classrooms are laden with materials reflecting anglo men as doctors, lawyers, architects, etc. while ethnic minorities, when they appear at all, inevitably reflect the less professional jobs (e.g., maids, nurses and janitors). These are needed jobs undeniably, but when you see the same typcasting year after year you wonder if someone is attempting to tell you something.

OR

> The thrust of multi-ethnic curriculum development is toward schools with multi-ethnic populations. Thus the common assumption by Anglos in homogeneous communities that they neither have to think about nor explore their own ethnic and cultural identity is set into motion. Anglos consequently become the real victims of cultural deprivation; persons who are ethnically different become "Those People."

Interestingly, "Those People" -- be they Black, Chicano, Asian American, or Native American -- have become part of the system of double messages. Children in general grow and develop a system of incorporating double messages into tools that they will later use in the world surrounding them. However, the double messages given to the ethnically diverse people of this country are received with resentment. Such messages indicate that freedom of choice, life, liberty, and happiness exist for all, in one breath. Yet society has reinforced the belief that the development of maximum productive potential and greater economic solvency remain a dream.

The problem is that we are preparing our children to perpetuate double messages rather than developing the critical listening and communication skills necessary to prevent them. We adults need to look at what we are modeling for our children and youth.

PREPARING OUR CHILDREN FOR THE INTOLERANCE OF DIFFERENCES IN OUR SOCIETY

Our society has a tendency to label people, things, and ideas.

People are labeled individually for purposes of convenience, yes. But we go beyond the identification level to a far more damaging level. Allport suggests that salient and powerful labels such as "Blind Man" tend to prevent alternative classification. He views ethnic labels as this type if they refer to highly physical features. (i.e., Black, Asian American, and so forth.) He goes on to say

> Labels that point to some outstanding incapacity - feeble minded, cripple, blind man, let us call labels of PRIMARY POTENCY. These symbols act like shrieking sirens, deafening us to all finer discriminations that we might otherwise perceive. Even though the blindness of one man and the darkness of pigmentation of another may be defining attributes for some purposes, they are irrelevant and "noisy" for others.
>
> Most people are unaware of this basic law of language - that every label applied to a given person refers properly only to one aspect of his nature. You may correctly say that a certain man is human, a philanthropist, a chinese, a physician, and athlete. A person may be all of these; but the chances are that Chinese stands out in your mind as the symbol of Primary Potency. Yet neither this nor any other classificatory label can refer to the whole of man's nature. (only his proper name can do so)
>
> Thus each label we use, especially those of primary potency, distracts our attention from concrete reality. The living, breathing, complex individual - the ultimate unit of human nature - is lost to sight (Allport, p. 175, 1959).

Because of this detrimental thinking process and mindset, we see a resistance in our society to things or people who are different. When we see the parapalegic in public do we not shun them or make noises in our throats for the lack of words? Do we stare at the child with clicking sounds coming from braces supporting an erratic but determined stride? Do we oppose the bilingual component added to our center next year because we do not speak Spanish and stand a chance of losing our job? Yet 1/3 of our students do speak Spanish and we become angered because we have to keep yelling at them to speak English.

Are you an Anglo middle class person who engages in conversation about the urban poor Blacks and how you want to help them but never consider acknowledging poor whites or "poor white trash" (as referred to by some sociology texts), because it perhaps associates too closely with your own roots?

Hopefully the preceeding has provided a brief perusal of the

kinds of intolerance we perpetuate in verbal and nonverbal ways. The inverse of intolerance in this discussion will be tolerance. This word can have different connotations. As Allport states:

> Tolerance may be seen to be a flabby word. When we say that we tolerate a headache, or our shabby apartment, or neighborhood we certainly don't mean that we like them, but merely that in spite of our dislike we shall endure them. To tolerate newcomers in a community is merely a negative act of decency. It is, however, unfortunate that the English language lacks a better term to express the friendly and trustful attitude that one person may have toward another, regardless of the groups to which either belongs (Allport, p. 398, 1958).

There are aspects of your surroundings which are truly difficult to cope with or overcome. However, unless we make conscious efforts as adults to develop support systems and techniques for dealing with or being tolerant of certain situations, we will, once again, provide our children and youth with a pitiful and unfortunate model or springboard. Allport believes:

> In school (and in later life) tolerant individuals, as contrasted with prejudiced, do not need precise, orderly clear-cut instructions before they proceed with a task: They can "tolerate ambiguity" and there is no insistent demand for definiteness and structuredness. They feel it is safe to say "I don't know", and to wait until time brings the needed evidence.
>
> Their frustration tolerance seems to be relatively high. They are not thrown into a panic when threatened with deprivations. Feeling secure within their own egos, there is less of a tendency to externalize (project) conflict. (Allport, p. 400)

PREPARING OUR CHILDREN FOR THE PSYCHOLOGY OF ETHNOCENTRISM

The areas of double messages and intolerance of difference may be viewed as obstacles to achieving a meaningful and valued pluralistic society. It is here that I think the definition of pluralism is important. Webster defines it as:

> "a state of society in which members of diverse ethnic, racial, religious, or social groups maintain an autonomous participation in and development of their traditional culture or special interest within the confines of a common civilization."

Ethnocentrism more specifically addresses obstacles to pluralism in relationship to our American Culture.

Ethnocentrism is the emotional attitude that one's race, nation, or culture is superior to all others. Ethnocentrism acts to discourage change in the internal arrangements of a culture . . .both positive and negative. Ethnocentrism is manifested by the establishment of standards of behavior by which everything is compared and judged. Groups in society are described by those ways in which they deviate in some direction from a norm. It causes one to hold on to what Is and reject what Is Different (Stage 7, 1976).

From a historical perspective, the process of ethnocentric thinking has been perpetuated and supported by many institutions and many tactics. One such tactic is racism. Another is Victim Blaming -- the process of defining observed differences within ethnic, racial or socioeconomic groups as deficits. It has unfortunately served as a model for social programs and institutions whose purpose is "to make things better" for the disadvantaged. This will be further discussed under Victim Blaming.

A useful definition of racism is difficult to find as the definitions themselves are sometimes racist, but Dr. Asa Hilliard has developed one which adequately reviews the phenomenon and regards it as a mental illness. "As such," he says, "it has the following symptoms:

1. Denial of reality (in face of evidence)
2. Perceptual distortion
3. Projection of blame
4. Phoebic reaction to differences (inability to relate humanly to people who are different)
5. Delusions of grandeur." (Hilliard, 1974)

Legislation and Scientific Research

Historically, discrimination has haunted those who were different in appearance. This can be seen in overview of legislated and scientific beliefs. Jordan states, for example, that in lieu of our present social system, a bedrock of social structure and order was established in this country which gave whites access to upward mobility. He goes on to say that at the same time

> while "slave" served as a working model of subordination it was one that could be applied only to Negroes and thus the status of slave became the very model of what white Americans could never be. (Jordan, 1969)

Segregation, the external control of black and other minority communities,

is based on models of legislated domination and subordination. Legislation such as the following designed to keep slaves ignorant -- and in the fields -- was passed in many states.

> . . .And whereas, the having of slaves taught to write, or suffering them to be employed in writing, may be attended with great inconveniences; be it therefore enacted by the authority aforesaid, that all and every person or persons whatsoever, who shall hereafter teach or cause any slave or slaves to be taught, to write, or shall, use or employ every such person or persons, shall for every such offense, forfeit the sum of one hundred pounds current money (Statutes at Large of South Carolina, VII, 1740, p. 661).

To further perpetuate the myth of inferiority behind such legislation, additional public support was forthcoming. Guess who spoke these words:

> . . .I am not or ever have been in favor of making voters or jurors of Negroes nor of qualifying them to hold office, nor marry white people . . .I will say . . .in addition. . .that there is a physical difference between white and black races which I believe will forever forbid the two races living together on terms of social and political equality. And inasmuch as they do remain together there must be the position of superior and inferior, and I as much as any other man am in favor of having the superior position assigned to the white race (Sinkler, pp. 45-46, 1972).

This is the statement of Abraham Lincoln.

Moving from public sanction of such beliefs, we next enter the Halls of Science. Sillen and Thomas cite several examples in their book Racism and Psychiatry: In 1906, Dr. Robert Bean, a professor at the Johns Hopkins University, published an article in the Journal of Anatomy on the peculiarities of the Negro brain. He claimed that the brains of black people were smaller and had fewer nerve cells and fibers. In view of his belief that the number and position of these fibers regulated efficiency, he concludes that "possibilities of developing the Negro are limited". Bean goes on to state:

> The white man was endowed with determination, will power and self control, 'with a high development of ethical and esthetic faculties and great reasoning power'. The black loves melody and ostentation, lacks judgement, and is incapable of devising hypotheses. 'We are forced to conclude', he said, 'that it is useless to elevate the Negro by education or otherwise. . .' (Sillen, Thomas, pp. 4-5)

Carl Jung, who saw himself as an expert on blacks, made the observation that the "different strata of the mind correspond to the history of races." "The black person", he continues, "has a whole historical layer less than the white man." (pp. 13-14) Lewis Terman, Father of the Stanford Binet is quoted as saying:

> . . .a low level of intelligence was very, very common among Spanish-Indian and Mexican families of the South West and also among negros. Their dullness seems to be racial . . .the children of such persons are uneducable beyond the merest rudiments of training. No amount of school instruction will ever make them intelligent voters or capable citizens in the true sense of the word. Judged psychologically, they cannot be considered normal (p. 35).

The 1960's - 70's are filled with additional findings and commentary. This time intellectual researchers like Jensen, Shockley, Moynihan, Coleman, et. al., are attempting to do the same old thing. Dr. Asa Hilliard stated at the NAEYC Teacher Training Conference, 1974, that racism is America's number one health problem.

Cultural Democracy and Pluralism

Another aspect of ethnocentric influence is the inability to acknowledge and value cultural democracy. Alfredo Castaneda states:

> Cultural democracy is easily misunderstood. It should not be seen as a plea for separating or breaking up groups of people. Cultural democracy refers, rather, to the legal right of the individual to be different while at the same time a responsible member of the larger, dominant society. Cultural democracy refers to the idea that there are completely different yet equally legitimate ways of choosing what one prefers to do and how and when to do it, and different ways of making judgements about what people do and think. Just as people of different persuasions on any subject interpret events differently, so do different cultures or ethnic groups prize different things. Different cultures or ethnic groups must live beside one another with respect and understanding for these differences. The best place for individuals to acquire this respect and understanding of others and themselves is in the school. Unfortunately the public schools have not traditionally embodied the features of cultural democracy that would make this ideal a reality. (Castaneda, pp. 16-17, 1974)

This is not to say that developing this sense of respect and diversity alone will reform curriculum, negative attitudes and societal unrest. Such a foundation, however, will begin to make it possible for a teaching/learning process to exist which will give our children and youth tools for monitoring their own view of the world and developing problem-solving techniques to substantiate or invalidate such views (Greene, 1975).

It is important to remember that the positively viewed notion of the "melting pot" really referred to a great hope of eliminating differences. From an historical perspective, Greenbaum discusses a technique of melting in his essay on pluralism:

> The history of assimilation in America suggests two overarching reasons why so many immigrants learned so fast, asked so few questions, and rose so rapidly during the first decades of this century. Most important is the fact that the main fuel for the American Melting pot was shame. The immigrants were best instructed in how to repulse themselves; millions of people were taught to be ashamed of their own faces, their family names, their parents and grandparents, and their class patterns, histories and life outlooks. This shame had incredible power to make us learn, especially when coupled with hope, the other main energy source for the melting pot-hope about becoming modern, about being secure, about escaping the wars and depressions of the old country, and about being equal with other Americans.
>
> But both shame and hope develop by comparison with something better. By now it is evident to millions that American modernity, security, and equality are not what they might have been. Among the major achievements of our time, the shocks and the failures also must be included. Increasingly, there are fewer reasons for poor, working-class and middle-class Americans to look to elite values and feel either shameful about their own traditions or hopeful about the prospects of assimilating into the American Mainstream. Even if we dislike or lack some of our own traditions, we have trouble enthusiastically imitating this great elite; we might as well seek new directions. Millions are no longer willing to sacrifice their own history, aspirations, ideas, memories, sentiments and social and cultural styles-or to again mistake manners for morals-for the sake of Anglo-American Tradition. The shame and hope still exist in some degree of course, but they will

> never have the same force in the American socialization process. And indeed, now that the decline of Anglo-American leadership and ideals has produced significant skepticism, it is predictable that such shame will continue to decline, that self-respect will become a new force, and that hope will take different and more pluralistic forms (Greenbaum, p. 431, 1974).

Meanwhile, we are in a transition period where ethnically different people are challenging the ethnocentric thrusts, especially in our schools. There are children who are lacking a reinforcing sense of who they are as a direct result of ethnocentric tendencies of books, media, and other materials found in their varied environments. For example, the projection of the white superiority concept manifests itself in the fact that:

> Jesus is white, santa claus is white, Miss America is white, good guys wear white, dick and jane are white, heaven is white; children's literature refers to fair hair, the fair Jesus, the fair young maiden; the dictionary refers to fair as a contrast to the "idea that dark coloring was foul."

So in your encounters with children and their interactions in your home or classrooms, do you find them bombarded with an ethnocentric milieu? Bulletin boards with all-white children neatly cut from Parents Magazine on a black background? Collage materials with all-white people and the occassional, accidental black person advertising Ultra Sheen in Newsweek?

What we are preparing children to perpetuate remains a question so far as an ethnocentric view in our society is concerned. Once again, however, that view is dependent upon an awareness of what we as adults are perpetuating and modeling. Further, it is dependent upon the extent to which we continue to give approval -- directly or by default -- for its existence.

PREPARING OUR CHILDREN FOR VICTIM BLAMING

Each of our three areas of discussion could be expanded into individual studies. The intent of this presentation, however, has been to reiterate what many of us know and believe, with the hope that this time more of us will become involved in doing something about it.

If as adults we have been neither good models nor provided tools with which children can combat double messages, intolerance of differences, and ethnocentrism, then most certainly we can expect children to blossom into fine victim blamers.

Victim Blaming, our fourth area of discussion, is a way of thinking that causes one to look for the source of a problem within that person identified with the problem (Phillips, Valley, 1976). William Ryan looks at victim blaming from this perspective:

> The generic process of Blaming the Victim is applied to almost every American Problem. The miserable health care of the poor is explained away on the grounds that the victim has poor motivation and lacks health information. The problems of slum housing are traced to the characteristics of tenants who are labeled as 'southern rural migrants' not yet 'acculturated' to life in the big city. The 'multiproblem' poor, it is claimed, suffer the psychological effects of impoverishedment, the 'culture of poverty,' and the deviant value system of the lower classes' consequently though unwittingly, they cause their own troubles. From such a viewpoint, the obvious fact that poverty is primarily an absence of money is easily overlooked (Ryan, p. 5, 1971).

The resolution of the "problems" associated with ethnic economic and cultural differences of children was to elevate everyone to the standards and values of majority culture -- the ethnocentric viewpoint.

Compensatory programs were designed in education programs to correct the differences. The observed differences sighted by white researchers were viewed as deficits. Relatively little time was devoted to analyzing the strengths inherent in those observed differences. It is questionable whether white researchers' perspectives could in fact do this because of the ethnocentric foundations upon which so much theorizing and researching are base. Regarding compensatory programs, then, I must ask, what is being compensated? Since the models of these programs looked at the weaknesses of the economically and ethnically different child, it seems logical to assume that the inquiries were specifically designed to look for weakness. How can we expect anything positive from such studies?

Victim Blaming is a process which is used almost daily by many of us. For example, it is interesting to hear a teacher say: "I treat all my students the same". The same individuals will also tell you that they prefer to ignore differences. Very few realize what they are saying because when you treat everyone the same, you are treating them differently by default. This may be an innocent contradiction but it is one we must not continue. Ryan states that "cloaked in kindness and concern, and bearing all the trappings and statistical furbellows of scientism, it (victim blaming) is obscured by a perfumed haze of humanitarianism." (p. 6)

PREPARING OURSELVES TO BE RESPONSIBLE ADULTS AND CHILD ADVOCATES:
What to do on Monday

The beginning of this presentation acknowledged that as a society we are preparing our children and youth for the future. However in 1976 -- a very special year for some -- I fear we are preparing children to repeat history. Further inaction seems to be a retrograde force driving the wheel of the future. So. What can we do on Monday?

The following ideas are springboards for thought. They can be operational and useful tools for introspection as well as for analyzing the environments you provide for children and those who serve them.

1. Begin to examine the lines of communication which permeate your everyday living. Build into your program and/or individual mindset a systematic approach to sending and receiving accurate messages. Raise it as part of your staff and parent meetings, as well as with your peers. A helpful tool is Peoplemaking, an excellent book by Virginia Satir.

2. Be aware of the ethnocentric people, places and things which hamper the development of a pluralistic society. Alienation and polarization is bad for all children unless extreme circumstances warrent isolation. Read William Greenbaum's aritcle entitled "America in Search of a New Ideal: An Essay on the Rise of Pluralism." The Harvard Educational Review, August, 1974.

3. Actively develop a perspective which views differences as essential to human growth and development. In the classroom encourage collaboration on the subject of differentness. They are all around us and make life interesting. This helps people (a) better understand themselves as individuals, (b) understand themselves in relationship to others, (c) develop mutual respect which allows meaningful participation in groups, (d) and learn the art of "bridge building" between self and others.

4. Read Blaming The Victim by William Ryan. Become aware of how you and your peers use the techniques.

5. Participate in an act of self-discovery by asking yourself how you formed your own ethnic and/or cultural identity. If you are not sure what this means or if you feel you do not have such an identity, how then can you teach children who bring one of their own to the classroom? You do have one. Find it!

Being a responsible adult requires an ongoing evaluation of what you are doing and where you are going. Today it means asking yourself what you modeling and giving permission for children and youth to do. It means owning the fact that you are preparing children and youth by your direct and indirect actions as well as by default or irresponsibility.

This is the challenge I leave with you. I would like to close with some special words of Camus:

Don't walk in front of me -- I may not follow
Don't walk behind me -- I may not lead
Walk beside me and just be my friend.

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